TWO STUDIES IN EARLY MUGHAL HISTORY

YUSUF HUSAIN

indian institute of advanced study

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PREFACE

Although in recent years much has been written on the rule of the Great Mughals in India, the present study traces the Timurid backdrop—political, cultural and traditional—from which Babur, the founder of the dynasty, had sprung. The provenance of some of the state measures, innovations and practices subsequently introduced by the Great Mughals in the land of their adoption have been highlighted. The *Jagirdari* system, some of the court etiquettes such as *Kurnish,* architectural patterns, garden designs, deep academic interest, cultivation of fine arts, and urbanism were practices rooted in Babur's central Asian legacy and were revived in the new environment by his successors. Thus the amalgam of cultural synthesis that came into focus about half a century later was greatly enriched by the advent of Babur in India.

The study also brings out, however briefly, the *malaise* to which Hindustan, after the death of Sultan Firoz Shah, had sunk. The succeeding Sultans were weak and quite often incapable of arresting the growth and proliferation of centrifugal tendencies which had eclipsed the power of Delhi. Babur with one stroke had restored Central authority and integrated territories from Kabul to Patna under a vigorous, humane and sophisticated rule.

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Yusuf Husain

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I

BABUR'S CENTRAL ASIAN HERITAGE

LIKE Chengiz Khan, Timur was a world-conqueror. He established a vast territorial empire by conquering the principalities that had sprung up in Central and Western Asia as fiefs of the descendants of Chengiz Khan. Chengiz Khan had divided his empire among his four sons. On his death in 1227 the country between the rivers Amu-Darya (Oxus) and Sir-Darya (Jaxartes)[1] had fallen to the share of his son Chaghatay, whose descendants thereafter ruled for more than a century. Each succeeding Sultan had become more degenerate and more contemptible than his predecessor, while the insolent independence of powerful vassals, at the head of large bodies of cavalry, kept the country in conditions bordering on anarchy. Puppets and sham descendants of the mighty Chengiz Khan sat on the thrones of Persia, Mawarannahr and China, while their former vassals began to assert their independence in every direction. Under the leadership of the Ming dynasty China was the first to overthrow the Mongol domination. Iran, however, had not been able to rehabilitate itself after the Mongol conquest.

The sources are all in broad agreement that the Mongol conquerors had subjected great populous cities and provinces to brutal massacres as was the case in Balkh, Shuburqan,[2] Merv, Herat, Ray, Hamadan, Qum, Isfahan and Baghdad. In some

[1] The Arabs called these rivers Jaihun and Saihun.

[2] The present day Shibarkhan in North-Western Afghanistan.

areas on the frontiers, frequently traversed by armies, the native population was either completely annihilated or had fled, leaving the land waste. Similar was the lot of the majority of cities on both sides of the Euphrates, which were all devastated and deserted. Indescribable was the extent of land laid waste elsewhere as a result of the slaughter, in the regions of Baghdad, Azarbaijan and Rum (Asia Minor). After several decades of Mongol carnage, Rashid al-Din Fazlallah Hamadani observed that not even a tenth part of the land was under cultivation.[1]

The neglect of agriculture under the Il-Khan rulers of Iran was mainly because the Mongol aristocracy cherished nomadic traditions which were antagonistic to settled life, whether in agricultural areas or in towns, and favoured unlimited exploitation of settled peasants and town-dwellers. The *Yasa* of Chengiz Khan required the Mongols to lead a nomadic life, not to settle nor to dwell in towns. The Mongol aristocracy regarded itself as a military encampment in the enemy country. If there was any resistance to the will of the tribal steppe lords they seized upon the spoils of war; if the people offered unconditional submission they fleeced them with heavy taxes. This ruthless policy continued under the first six Il-Khans, descendants of Hulagu Khan.

During the reign of Ghazan certain reforms were introduced and the previous negative policy was replaced by a constructive one, the credit for which goes to the enlightened outlook of the ruler Ghazan and his minister Rashid al-Din Fazlallah Hamadani, who believed that it was necessary to ameliorate the condition of the peasantry, the real source of the state's income. He saw that their well-being was vital to the interest of the state. But during the reign of Ghazan's successors the revenue officials invented new methods of fiscal oppression and made arbitrary use of their administrative powers. The Mongol nomad aristocracy revived the pre-Ghazan system of unrestricted pillage of the peasantry and the craftsmen, to the utter ruin of both agriculture and trade. Some of the ruined cities like Herat, for example, had been restored, but they were now

[1] *Jami -al-Tawarikh,* ed. Alizade, pp.557-8.

shrunken. Herat became a large city once more under the Timurids.

The predatory activities of the nomad lords and the constant struggles between the feudal aristocracy of Transoxiana (Mawarannahr) had brought ruin to the western regions of the Chaghatay kingdom and to Moghulistan in the east. The country had been ruled by the descendants of Chaghatay for nearly a century when Timur was born in 1327. Chaghatay was the second son of Chengiz Khan, and his kingdom was created to serve as a bridge between China and Western Asia, between Iran and Turan. The order of succession to the Chaghatay Khans was not strictly uniform. It was hereditary as well as elective. The Khan must belong to the line of Chaghatay rulers, but if any of his sons had shown capacity and talent, and had given some assistance to his father in the governance of the country, he was generally allowed to succeed; otherwise the ablest and most distinguished of the brothers of the late Khan, or any of his uncles, or relations who enjoyed the greatest influence in the tribe, was called upon to take up the task of government. Ordinarily, minors did not succeed at the time of their father's death; but the election was open to them at a future period, when they were of age. The chief tribe of the Chaghatays was that of pure Mughals. That is why their habitat was called Moghulistan. The language of the tribe was Turki, that of the towns was generally Persian. Chaghatay and his immediate descendants lived in the desert of Kipchak but within a century of Chaghatay's death, the Grand Khans instead of living in encampment with their tribals, started visiting and lingering on in the rich and populous regions on the Sir-Darya and Amu-Darya, where they soon fell into a state of subservience to their ministers of chiefs, athough they still enjoyed hereditary reverence from the Mongol tribals.

The Mongols, we are told by the chroniclers of the period, resembled beasts, their squat bodies suited to attack, bow legs and ugly faces marked by prominent ears and flat noses, swarthy skins, and bristling hair. And behind their repulsive exterior enhanced by the filthiness of their bodies, as described by Amir Khusrau, lay a stark ferocity that daunted their more

civilized antagonists. Yet most of these physical traits were quickly lost when the invaders, whose numbers were relatively small, settled in the midst of a subject population. Having left their women behind, they took mates from the conquered territory. So their descendants, although the ancient names might be kept, would inevitably be assimilated to the type of the conquered masses.

In the frontier region between Iran and Turan, Timur, a chieftain of the Barlas clan, had himself proclaimed Amir of Transoxiana in the year 1369, and with a Chaghatay as his nominal lord started on his career of conquest to re-establish the empire of Chengiz Khan. When he died thirty-six years later, his empire extended from the Aral Sea to the Arabian Sea and from the Mediterranean to the Altai mountains and from Smyrana to Delhi. And in spite of the frightful destruction which accompanied his campaigns in Kipchak, Khurasan, Iran, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Georgia and India, it was the Islamic tradition and civilization which not only survived but re-emerged stronger and more refined.

In fact, religion for Timur was but a convenient instrument of his ruthless policy. He himself posed as a champion of Islam. Hostility between different Muslim sects provided a good pretext for the slaughter of Muslims in Mazandaran (the Caspian), because the Muslims there were of Shi'ite persuasion, while in Damascus they were killed after they had been accused of antagonism to the descendants of the Prophet. Christians in Georgia were slaughtered because they were idolators, while the European Christians were courted as allied against the Ottomans. In India the Muslims of Delhi were put to the sword in thousands for not being faithful enough to the tenets of Islam.

Timur founded a territorial empire like that of Chengiz Khan, but he knew both destruction and construction, while Chengiz Khan took pride only in pillage and plunder. The inner life and motivations were more complex in the case of Timur, than with Chengiz Khan, who according to Rashidud-din Hamadani, the Chief Minister of the Mongol Il-Khan Ghazan, took delight only in riding the horses of slain enemies and possessing their women-folk and daughters. Pursuing his

enemies, seizing their properties and riding their horses was his pride. It is true that Timur had boundless ambition but under the influence of Islamic civilization his approach was more humanized and sophisticated than that of Chengiz Khan. Undoubtedly, Timur's conquests and sacking of cities like Baghdad, Damascus and Delhi caused much destruction and suffering which cannot be morally justified, yet, it would be wrong historically to couple the name of Timur with that of Chengiz Khan.

When Timur started his career of conquest the Chaghatay Kingdom had broken into pieces and so had Iran, the Kingdom of the Il-Khans, the descendants of Hulagu Khan after the annihilation of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad. Iran was ruled by four dynasties during the forty years preceding Timur's assumption of sovereignty of which the Muzaffari, ruling over Fars, Iraq i-'Ajam and Kirman, was the most important. The Il-Khans ruled over Baghdad and Azerbaijan, and lastly the Sarbadars of Sabzwar and the Kurts of Herat. The Kurts were Afghans, the descendants of the Ghurids. Perpetual civil war prevailed among them. Iran was divided amongst these principalities when Timur defeated them one by one and annexed the land. In Mawarannahr, and the Steppes, the Chaghatay rulers had lost their authority and the local chiefs had set themselves up as rulers in their place, causing great chaos and instability. Peace and security had disappeared from the land and the trade routes had become unsafe for travellers and merchants. Many of the heads of the remoter tribes repudiated all superior authority, and carved out kingdoms for themselves. Kipchak became divided between the Khans of Tura and the Uzbegs. In the thirteenth century the Chaghatays had embraced Islam. Mubarak was converted to Islam in 1266. Other Chaghatay clans followed suit including the Barlas to which Timur belonged. By the turn of the century these clans after accepting Islam began to regard themselves as Turks, while still claiming the title and lineage of Chaghatay. They had freely intermingled and integrated with the original Turkish population of the region. The process of assimilation between the Mongols and the Turks was accelerated after they had accepted Islam. The Nomad aristocrats

of the Steppes contemptuously called the descendants of Chaghatay "*qurannas*" (mongrels and half-breeds) while the Turks reciprocated by calling them "gete" meaning robbers and rascals. Timur was proud to call himself a Turk and hated the appellation "Mongol" even for his pre-Islamic ancestors. In fact, the Mongols who had migrated to newly occupied countries in the time of Chengiz Khan, integrated with the people of the Central Asian region, thus giving birth to a Turkish population. In Mongolia they retained their original characteristics. Nomadic feudalism was the pivot around which the Mongol social organization revolved. The history of Mongol feudalism is the history of their social institutions. Timur's empire represented the Turco-Mongol political and military system. The Turkish influence introduced the elements of Islamic *Shari'at* in the system, of which the Timurids became enthusiastic upholders.

It is a universal principle of political behaviour that excesses of local authorities compel people to desire to belong to a larger political entity with a strong central authority to check anarchy and disorder, while the remoteness and ineffectiveness of the central territorial government in its turn makes the people long for regional autonomy. Such internally contradictory political motivation is a universal phenomenon, especially in medieval history when the means of communication and contact were limited. Thus the play of centripetal and centrifugal forces forms the warp and woof of political thought and action. Having thoroughly organized his Chaghatay forces, Timur first subjugated the Steppes and Transoxiana and then led campaigns against Khurasan, Iran, Syria, Turkey and India and was successful everywhere. His conquests made him feel that he was the most powerful ruler in the world. Just before his death he started on his campaign to subdue China, but the cold hand of death did not allow him to proceed further than the plains of Otrar beyond the Sir-Darya. He passed away on 18 February, 1405, the Year of the Ape, after having ruled for thirty-six years.[1]

[1] The Mongol calendar consisted of a cycle each year being named after an animal in the following order: Mouse, Ox, Tiger, Hare, Dragoon-Fish, Serpent, Horse, Sheep, Ape, Fowl, Dog and Pig. The year in the cycle, began in spring.

Timur, despite being all-powerful and invincible, retained the titular Chaghatay rulers, descendants of Chengiz Khan, who were still venerated. While all edicts and commissions were issued in his name, the *Khutba* was read and coins were struck in the names of the descendants of Chaghatay. Having gained full political authority, Timur had Prince Suyurghatmish proclaimed as the Chaghatay Sultan in 1370. After the latter's death in 1388, his son Sultan Mahmud was set upon the throne. It was Timur's custom to take the Chaghatay Sultan with him on his campaigns in the east and in the west. Sultan Mahmud took a conspicuous part in the battle of Angora against the Turkish Sultan Bayazid and captured him. After the death of Sultan Mahmud in 1403, Timur, out of respect for him, had coins minted in his name for another year. However, he did not set up another Khan on the throne and thus the fictitious position came to an end, although the Friday *Khutba* continued to be read in the late Sultan's name till Timur's death in 1405. Timur's descendants gave up this practice for good. There is no evidence to show that Timur honoured the Chaghatay Sultans in the presence of his troops or before the general public on solemn occasions. Honours due to the Mongol king, were always received by Timur himself without the slightest hesitation.[1] He did not care to call himself Sultan and called himself only Amir. Yet the soldiery and the people knew that he was their *de facto* ruler and the Chaghatay Sultans were mere puppets in his hands. When he went on his long campaigns he did not leave the sultans in the capital, for he did not like to take any political risk of their conspiring to re-assert their authority. He had had the experience of overcoming several rivals in bitterly contested struggles before he gained the veritable sovereign authority.[2] Although a respector of the Mongol traditions, Timur, throughout his life,

[1] Sharfuddin Ali Yazdi, *Zafar Namah*, Vol. I, pp.506-15, 613. There is another *Zafar Namah* (Book of Victory) by Nizam al-Din Shami who was at Baghdad when the city submitted to Timur. In 1401, he was directed by Timur to write a history of his reign on the basis of the official records. He completed and presented the work to Timur in 1404, before he returned to Samarqand. Sharfuddin Ali Yazdi has utilized it profusely (MS. Br. Mus. Add. 23980 Rieu, Pub. by F. Taner of Prague).

[2] Barthold, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*, pp. 11 and 27.

adhered to the Iranian-Islamic tradition of statecraft and government, namely, its exaltation of the sovereign above the people, the centralization of the state and the upkeep of a professional army to support the ruler's authority.

Contrary to Chengiz Khan's practice, Timur encouraged agriculture, trade and crafts. If he saw any agricultural land lying uncultivated, he gave instructions immediately to bring it under the plough. According to Sharfuddin Yazdi, Timur could not bear to see arable land lying waste. A very unusual view for a central Asian Tartar whose traditional attitude was to look down upon the settled life of the peasant whose drudgery he considered beneath his nomadic dignity. He was also concerned with acquiring adequate supplies of grain for his soldiery which was not possible without promoting agriculture. For a long time Timur had been turning in his mind the idea of invading China. In view of this he ordered the development of lands bordering on Mughalistan (Semirechye). A settlement was established at Ashpara, east of the Sir-Darya. Timur also ordered that those expert in raising crops of corn should be sent from the bordering Samarqand to devote themselves to tilling the arable lands lying waste on the way to China. The production of food and raw materials inevitably stimulated the increase of population. And since military transportation depended on animals, wide pastures remained a vital necessity which had to be attended to. Under the Il-Khans of Persia and the Mongol rulers of Transoxiana, agricultural lands were turned into state-owned lands in which the rents and taxes coincided, while Timur encouraged individual proprietorship as it gave greater inducement to the cultivator to improve the land. Under the Mongols, feudal landownership was recognized which took the form of *Iqta'dari* to meet the need of financing military operations. This system continued under Timur also. But in the pre-Timurid era large *Iqta's* helped in the disintegration of the political system and the economy of Iran and Transoxiana of which Timur took full advantage to consolidate his own position. When Timur appeared on the scene, law and order in Transoxiana had completely broken down, brigands flourished and local chiefs had set themselves up as independent rulers, carrying on

continual war and depredations. Chengiz Khan's *Yasa* did not give any guidance with regard to the administration of the country. It referred only to the capture and division of booty in war and hunt. This clearly shows the main object of unification of the Mongol tribes under Chengiz's leadership. The rights of the Grand Khans and his lieutenants were also defined. Chengiz Khan was virtually worshipped by his nomad Mongol followers. After the Mongols embraced Islam, their attitude towards their leader changed. Timur enforced strict discipline among his soldiery but unlike Chengiz Khan he was never deified or worshipped by them. They considered him to be a superior human being whose inexorable despotism must be respected and who must be obeyed at all costs. His conquests made him feel that he was superior to all others and his uninterrupted achievements and victories in the various campaigns that he undertook gave him immense confidence in his own destiny and he began to aspire to world conquest. He was not the destroyer as some historians have tried to paint him, but a master who arranged matters with an iron hand. The crying need of the times was to have a leader of the type of Timur who would establish peace and security at the point of the sword. According to Sharfuddin Yazdi, the author of *Zafar Namah,* compiled nineteen years after Timur's death, during the reign of Shahrukh, Timur's son and successor, the social and political situation of the time was such

> That God Almighty elevated Timur Sahib Qiran (Lord of the Auspicious Conjunction of Stars) above his petty and mean-minded contemporaries and bestowed on him the sovereignty of many kingdoms. Timur served as the instrument of history by breaking up the power of petty tyrants ruling the districts and cities and establishing peace and justice, so that if a man travelled from east to west with gold and silver, he would not be molested.

The author of the *Zafar Namah* gives an estimate of Timur's character by saying that

> The real character of His Majesty was inclined to justice and the promotion of the prosperity of the people and the

> object of his ambition was to develop the conquered territories. The terror displayed and the destruction wrought occasionally by his world-conquering troops was due to necessities of conquest, for countries cannot be annexed without meting out punishment to resisters and the establishment of prestige.[1]

He further adds that

> As successful rulers and world conquering heroes enjoy Divine favour, "And we have sent you as our deputies (*Khalifas*) in the world" (Al-*Qur'an*), the divine attributes of terror and mercy find their full expression through this highly honoured and distinguished group of persons. Sometimes the lightning of their wrath begins to fall and the world is burnt thereby or sometimes the wind of Divine favour begins to blow and they light a thousand lamps of mercy and kindness, making the world happy and prosperous.[2]

Just as Sharfuddin Yazdi is a panegyrist of Timur, Ibn-i 'Arab Shah, who was taken captive as a young man in Damascus and carried off to Samarqand, is highly biased against him. In his work *Ajaib al-Maqdar fi Ahwal-i-Timur*, his anti-Timurid feelings have found full expression. He indulges in scandal-mongering also and in giving prominence to bazaar gossip. Gibbon characterized Ibn-i-'Arab Shah's work as mischievous and extremely unreliable. But even a denigrator like Ibn-i-'Arab Shah could not help recounting the constructive activities of Timur besides his destructive ones. For instance, Timur's concern for the development of agriculture in arable lands, his building of palaces, markets and gardens is recounted by him and is corroborated by other evidence also.

Some towns in Persia which had developed as centres of commerce and craft-industry in pre--Mongal times received a new impetus in the reigns of Ghazan Khan and Timur, serving an international market. Pre-eminent among these were

[1] *Zafar Namah*, vol. II, p.449.
[2] *Ibid*, vol. II pp.253-4.

Isfahan, Shiraz, Tabriz and Samarqand. Clavijo fixes the population of Tabriz in 1403 at 300,000 people. Josapha Barbaro gives the population of Shiraz as approximately 900,000 people, in the second half of the fifteenth century. The prosperity of these towns depended mainly on their location with regard to the great trade routes by land. The roads, we know, were so bad that wagons were of little use and goods had to be carried on pack animals. Many regions were infested by robbers, and every administrative boundary was made the excuse for collection of tolls. Under these conditions merchants came to travel in bands, accompanied by escorts of armed men. Law and order in Timur's empire greatly promoted internal trade between the urban centres of central and western Asia. The city-emporiums were connected with sea-ports in Syria, from where the merchandise was carried in Venetian and Genoese ships to Europe. A large proportion of the finer manufactures came from the territories within the Timurid empire, including silks, rugs, carpets, tapestries, brocades and embroideries of Persia and the damascened armours of Syria, (i.e., steel inlaid with gold and silver by a process perfected at Damascus) and artistic products in the precious metals. The demand for oriental spices, drugs, dyes, perfumes and gems was constant, and was greatly stimulated by the Crusades. Many words, by their derivation from the Arabic or Persian, show that they originally denoted imports from the east, e.g., sugar, syrup, cotton, satin, damask, muslin, crimson, scarlet, azure, lilac, spinach, artichoke, orange, lemon, apricot, camphor and saffron. The oriental superiority in metal-work, glass-making, the carving of crystal and ivory, the decoration of leather, and every branch of ceramics was very pronounced in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The account given by Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo, ambassador of Henry III of Castille (Spain) to the court of Timur, is extremely objective. Henry III of Castille was famous for his attempts to extend diplomatic relations of Spain to the remotest parts of the earth. He sent embassies to the princess of Christendom and to the rulers of Muslim countries, to gather information respecting their affairs, and to collect all the knowledge that could be useful for the good government of

his own country. Amongst other embassies, he sent two knights to the east who were present at the battle of Angora, between Timur and the Turkish monarch Bayazid in the year 1402, in which Bayazid was captured. Timur treated the Spanish ambassadors with distinction, and dismissed them on their return to Spain, in company with an envoy of his own, named Muhammad al-Qazi, who brought a complimentary letter and presents to the king of Castille. King Henry decided to send another embassy to the court of Timur. The persons selected to represent him at Samarqand were Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo, Gomez de Salazar, and a theologian named Fray Alonzo Paez de Santa Maria. Timur's envoy Muhammad al-Qazi accompanied them. They sailed from the port of Seville on 22 May 1403. Clavijo made up his mind to write a description of his travels. He has left us a highly interesting account of his journey from Spain to Samarqand and back, and of his impressions about Timur and the social conditions obtaining in Central Asia (Mawarannahr) in the beginning of the fifteenth century. An English translation edited by Sir Clements R. Markham was published by the Hakluyt Society in 1859. Throughout his journey to Samarqand, Timur's envoy Muhammad al-Qazi was with the party which reached Samarqand, on 31 August 1404, and was received by Timur on Monday, 8 September 1404 in the Dilkhusha (Heart's Delight) Garden which was laid out in the meadows of Kanigil, east of Samarqand. An avenue of pine trees led from the city's Turquoise Garden to his garden. The palace, a fine specimen of secular structure, had a cupola covered with mosaic, and its three storeys were surrounded by colonnades. Sycamores lined the walks and each section of the garden was planted with different types of trees, some for their fruit and some for their flowers.[1]

Clavijo says:

> Timuor Beg was seated in a portal, in front of the entrance of a beautiful palace; and he was sitting on the ground. Before him there was a fountain, which threw up

[1] *Hilda Hookham, Tamburlane the Great,* p.180.

the water very high, and in it there were some red apples. The Lord was seated cross-legged, on silken embroidered carpets among round pillows. He was dressed in a robe of silk, with a high white hat on his head, on the top of which there was a spinal ruby, with pearls and precious stones round it.

As soon as the ambassadors saw the Lord, they made a reverential bow, placing the knee on the ground, and crossing the arms on the breast; then they went forward and made another; and then a third, remaining with their knees on the ground. The Lord ordered them to rise and come forward; and the knights, who had held them until then, let them go. Three Meerzas, who stood before the Lord, and were his most intimate councillors, named Alodal-Welee (Abdul Wali) Meerza, Borunde Meerza, and Noor Eddin Meerza, then came and took the ambassadors by the arms, and led them forward until they stood together before the Lord. This was done so that the Lord might see them better; for his eyesight was bad, being so old that the eyelids had fallen down entirely. He did not give them his hand to kiss, for it was not the custom for any great lord to kiss his hand; but he asked after the king, saying, "How is my son the king? Is he in good health?" When the ambassadors had answered, Timour Beg turned to the princes and nobles who were seated around him, amongst whom were one of the sons of Tokatmish, the former emperor of Tartary, several chiefs of the blood of the late emperor of Samarqand, and others of the family of the lord himself, and said, "Behold! here are the ambassadors sent by my son the king of Spain, who is the greatest king of the Franks, and lives at the end of the world. These Franks are truly a great people, and I still give my benediction to the king of Spain, my son. It would have sufficed if he had sent you to me with the letter, and without the presents, so well satisfied am I to hear of his health and prosperous state."[1]

According to Clavijo, the duties of Timur's young grandsons at the royal receptions were to receive from the foreign

[1] Clavijo, *Court of Timur*, tr. by Clement R. Markham, p.133.

ambassadors their letters of credence, carry them to Timur and lead the ambassadors upto Timur's throne.

The ambassadors were then taken to a room, on the right hand side of the place where Timour sat; and the nobles (Meerzas) who held them by the arms, made them sit below the Chinese ambassador, who had been sent to Timur by the emperor of China to demand tribute, which was formerly paid. When Timur saw the Spanish ambassadors seated below the Chinese ambassador, he ordered that they should be seated above him. From that time they always sat in that order at the feasts and entertainments given by Timur. The courtiers then asked the interpreter to tell the ambassadors what the lord had done for them. Timur in his early reign used to pay tribute to the emperor of China, but he refused to do so now. The Chaghatays contemptuously called the Chinese emperor Tangus, which meant 'pig emperor'.[1]

Clavijo gives a vivid account of the banquets given by Timur to celebrate his victories. As soon as the Spanish ambassadors, and others who had come from distant lands, were seated in order they brought much meat, boiled, roasted and dressed in many ways, along with roasted horses. They placed the roasted sheep and horses on very large round pieces of leather. When the lord called for meat, the people dragged it to him on these pieces of leather, so great was its weight; and as soon it was twenty paces of him, the carvers came, who cut it up, kneeling on the leather. They cut it in pieces, and put them in basins of gold, silver, earthen-ware, glass, and porcelain, which was very scarce and precious. The best piece was a haunch of the horse, with the loin, but without the legs, and they placed parts of it in ten cups of gold and silver. They also cut up the haunches of the sheep. They then put pieces of the tripes of the horses, about the size of a man's first, into the cups, and also entire sheep's heads, and in this way they made many dishes. When they had done so, they placed them in rows. Then some men came with soup, and they sprinkled salt over it, and put a little into each dish as sauce. As soon as this was done, the nobles and courtiers took

[1] *Ibid*, p.134.

these basins, one holding each side and one helping from behind, and placed them before the lord, the ambassadors, and nobles who were there. Timur sent the Spanish ambassadors two basins, from those which were placed before him, as a mark of favour. When this food was taken away, more was brought. It was the custom to take the food given to them to their lodgings, and if they did not do so, it was taken as an affront. Another custom was that when they took any food from in front of the ambassadors, they gave it to their retinue. Clavijo, with a touch of humorous exaggeration, observes that so much food was placed before them that if they had taken it away, it would have lasted them for half a year. When the roast and boiled meats were done with, they brought meat cooked in various other ways. After that came fruits, melons, grapes, and peaches and they gave them drink out of silver and golden jugs, particularly sugar and cream, a pleasant beverage, which they made in the summer time.

The dinner over, the men who bore the presents on their arms passed before the lord, and three hundred horses were also brought before the lord, which had been presented that day. After this was done, the Spanish ambassadors rose, and a noble was appointed to attend on them and see that they were provided with all that they required. This noble conducted the ambassadors to a lodging, near the place where Timur himself stayed, in which was a garden and plenty of water.[1]

When the ambassadors took leave of Timur he caused the presents which the Spanish King had sent him to be brought before him and received them with much honour. He distributed some of the presents to his wives. The name of his chief wife was Saray Mulk Khanam, daughter of the Chaghatay Khan of Mawarannahr. She was called the Greater Queen. Timur held her in great respect, although she is not known to have borne him any children. After his marriage with Saray Mulk Khanam, Timur adopted the title 'Gurgan' (son-in-law) of the great Khan. When twenty-seven years later Timur took to wife the daughter of the Mughal Khan Khizr Khoja, this

[1] *Ibid*, p.135.

princess Tukal Khanam by virtue of her Chaghatay blood became the second queen. Ibn Khaldun mentions that after the death of the titular Chaghatay Khan Suyurghatmish, Timur married the late Khan's chief wife. Clavijo saw some of his wives on different occasions. Timur had great regard and respect for them and built separate garden palaces for them.

Clavijo observes that there were many silken tents in the Dilkhusha Garden. Timur remained there for a few days, and then moved on to another garden later mentioned by Babur in his *Memoirs*. Clavijo mentions another feast to which they were invited and which was held in a vast garden with a very lofty and handsome entrance, made of bricks and adorned with tiles in blue and gold, arranged in various patterns. Clavijo says that the garden was very large and contained many fruit and shady trees. Amongst them there were avenues and wooden terraces on which people walked. In the garden there were many tents and awnings of red cloth, and of various coloured silks, some embroidered, others plain. In the centre of the garden there was a very beautiful house richly adorned with the walls covered with glazed tiles. Facing the entrance in the largest of the chambers, there was a silver-gilt platform as high as a man, and three arm's lengths wide on which a mattress of silk for Timur to be seated. The walls were hung with rose-coloured silk cloth, ornamented with plates of silver-gilt, set with emeralds, pearls, and other precious stones, tastefully arranged. Above these ornaments there were pieces of silk, whence hung tassels of various colours. That waned backwards and forwards in the breeze. Before the great arch, which formed the entrance to the chamber, there were similar decorations and silk raised on spear-poles, and held together by silken chords, with large tassels reaching the ground. The other chambers were also furnished in the same way, while the floor was covered with rich carpets.[1]

Further in the centre of the chambers there were two gold tables, each standing on four legs, the table and the legs were of one piece. Seven golden phials stood upon them, two of which

[1] Clavijo, pp.136-7.

were studded with large pearls, emeralds and turquoises, and each one had a ruby at the mouth. There were also six round golden cups, one of which was set with large round clear pearls inside, the centre adorned with a ruby, two fingers broad. The Spanish ambassadors were invited to this feast by Timur, but they had to wait for their interpreter, and when they arrived the lord had already finished his dinner. The lord said that the next time he sent for them, they were to come at once, and not to wait for the interpreter, but that this time he would forgive them. He had made this feast for them, so that they might see the house, and the people. The lord was in a great rage with the Meerzas, because the Spanish ambassadors had not come in time for the feast, and because the interpreter was not with them. He sent for the interpreter, and said, "How is it that you have enraged me? Why were you not with the Spanish ambassadors?" The knight who attended upon the ambassadors asked for mercy, and was pardoned, escaping some dreaded punishment. The lord sent word to the ambassadors, at their lodging, that as they had not been at the feast, they should have a part of it and sent them five roasted sheep, and two great jars of wine.

Sharf-al Din Yazdi gives a detailed description of the wedding festivities to which the foreign envoys were also invited. He mentions a marriage sermon by Sheikh Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn al-Jazair, a Syrian scholar.[1] The Chief Qazi of Samarqand, Salah al-Din, put the question to the bride to obtain her consent. The religious part of the marriage being over, it was followed by a sumptuous feast in which according to the Mongol custom wine and other drinks were served.[2] It appears that the law of *Shari'at* was put into abeyance on such occasions and the regulations of prohibition were not enforced, but in day to day life prohibition was enforced by the *Muhtasib*.

Clavijo has mentioned several banquets to which the ambassadors were invited. In these feasts wine was served. They served it out in such quantities and so often that it made the men drunk. They did not consider any pleasure in

[1] *Zafar Namah,* vol. I, p.615.
[2] *Ibid,* pp.452 and 458.

a festivity without getting drunk. The attendants served the wine on their knees, and when one cup was finished, they profferred another. If they were called upon to drink by their love of the lord, or by the lord's head, they must drink it all at one gulp, without leaving a drop. They called the man who drank the most *bahadur* which means a man of valour. Even the royal ladies took wine and enjoyed the drunkenness of the men. They came to the feasts unveiled. Wine was served to royal ladies by the relatives of the lord, including two small boys, also related to him. They held white napkins in their hands, and those who poured out wine, poured it in small golden cups which were placed on plates of gold. The cup-bearers then came forward, followed by those who poured it out, and when the former had got half way, they touched the ground three times with their right knee. Approaching the royal ladies, they took the cups, with their hands wrapped in the white napkins, so that they did not touch the cups, and presented them kneeling to the ladies. After the ladies had taken the cups, the cup-bearers walked backwards, so as not to turn their backs to the ladies with the empty plates in their hands. After walking back a little distance, they bent their right knees again, and remained thus. Sometimes, while these attendants waited before the ladies with their cups, the ladies ordered them to drink, and they knelt down, and drank all that was in the cups, turning them upside down, to show that nothing was left. On these occasions they showed their prowess in this respect to the amusement of all the ladies. At one of the feasts, the Chief wife of Timur called the Spanish ambassadors before her, and gave them to drink with her own hand, and she importuned Clavijo, who was an abstainer to drink, for she would not believe that he never touched wine. The drinking at these feasts was such that some of the men fell down drunk, and this was considered very jovial, for they thought that there could be no pleasure without drunken men around.[1]

Amongst the Mongols and Turks of Central Asia women enjoyed equality with men. Ibn Battuta, who visited this part of the world in the decade of Timur's birth, remarked on the

[1] *Ibid,* p.145.

respect shown to women by the Turks, wondering at the fact that they did not veil themselves like the Arab ladies, and were clearly visible from the open door of their tents. Timur's queens and other royal princesses gave state receptions and held banquets. They appeared very lightly veiled before their guests. They undertook public works and founded religious establishments. Among the nomads the duties of women were to drive the cars, to erect their tents, take them down again and pack them; to milk cows; and make butter, to dress and sew skins (which they did with tendons for thread, to make sandals, socks, and other garments. The duties of men were to make bows and arrows, stirrups, bridles, and saddles; to make tents and carts, to keep camels and to lead them. Both men and women tended the sheep and goats.[1]

Clavijo observes that when Timur called his people to war, all assembled including wives and children, and marched with him surrounded by their flocks and herds.

> None ever separates from their women and children, or from their herds and flocks. These all march with them as they go to war, migrating from one place to another. When thus on the way the women who have small children carry them along in little cradles which as the woman rides on horseback, she lays on the saddle bow in front. Such cradles are supported by broad straps which pass round the body, and thus the children are carried along. Indeed, the women appear to ride as comfortably and lightly thus burdened with their offspring as though they were free of them. The poorer folk have to load their families, with their tents, on their camels, but the children are worse off than those who travel with their children on horseback, for the camel goes with much rougher step than the horse.

Ibn-i-'Arab Shah has also given an account of the military qualities of the nomad Turkish women:

> There were also in Timur's army many women who mingled in the melee of battle and in the fiercest conflicts

[1] Hilda Hookham; *Tamburlane the Great,* pp.68-9.

> and strove with men and fought with brave warriors and overcame mighty hordes in combat with the thrust of the spear, the blow of the sword and shooting of arrows. When one of them was heavy with child and birth-pangs seized her when they were on the march, she turned from the way, and withdrawing apart and descending from her horse, gave birth to the child, and wrapping it in bandages, soon mounted her beast and taking the child with her, followed her company, and there were in his army men born on the march and grown to full age who married and begot children and yet never had a fixed home.

In Timur's time women did not have much influence in political affairs. But sometimes they softened his wrath against a person of royal descent who had fallen into disgrace for some reason or other. More often than not they succeeded in achieving their objective and Timur pardoned the offender.[1] For instance, queen Saray Khanam intervened through some Amirs in favour of Khalil Sultan to assuage Timur's anger against the prince, his grandson.

With the wealth that Timur brought from the conquered countries, he made Samarqand the greatest capital in Asia. The caravans brought to Samarqand the finest silk fabrics from China and the Caspian province, jewels and golden and silver ware from Sultaniya and the produce from India, which came by the southern sea-route to Hunza and from there by camel caravans. Glass and metal-ware were brought from Syria and Asia Minor. Timur made the trade routes safe for merchants to travel. Clavijo gives a detailed account of his journey from Trebizond to Samarqand in four months at the beginning of the fifteenth century. His personal experience was that with the exception of the first few stages, where the travellers were bothered by the exactions of the local chiefs, 'the whole country was at peace under the rule and government of Timur'. In Tabriz, Clavijo noticed a concourse of merchants and merchandise, caravanserais, splendid bath houses, public squares where food was 'nicely served forth, for present eating', fountains and iced water in copper jugs for the thirsty

[1] *Zafar Namah*, vol. II, p.641.

traveller. The population of Tabriz was about two hundred thousand house-holders within the limits of the city. This comes to about a million people. The Bavarian captive, Schiltberger, thought that Timur received from Tabriz alone a large revenue than the most powerful king in Christendom.[1] According to Clavijo, the city of Sultaniya was so full of commercial activity that it brought into the Imperial treasury each year a vast income from customs. Timur had sole right over the mines of Badakhshan in the Hindukush, from which came sapphires, lapis lazuli and rubies. This was a great source of income for Timur. From Tabriz all the way along the Khurasan road, relays of horses were kept ready at posts a day's ride apart for imperial envoys. At some places there were one hundred horses, at others two hundred; thus the posts were arranged on the road as far as Samarqand. Those whom Timur sent in any direction, or who were sent to him, went on these horses as far as they could, travelling day and night. He had horses placed in deserts, uninhabited regions, as well as in places that were populous. He also built great houses in uninhabited places, where horses and provisions were supplied by the nearest towns and villages. The custom required of anyone riding a horse, if he was a person of high position or merchant or ambassador, to give up his horse to anyone going to Timur, and if anyone refused, it cost him his head, for such were the commands of Timur. Not only was this road furnished with post horses, but there were also messengers on all the roads, so that news could come from every part of the empire. 'Timur is pleased with him who travels a day and night for fifty leagues, and kills two horses, than with him who does the distance in three days'[2] Clavijo saw small pillars on the roads, to mark each league. Timur's soldiery was expected to march twelve, or at least ten of these leagues in each day's journey. Each league of theirs was equal to two leagues of Spain[3] Sometimes when the matter was of great urgency the messengers travelled fifteen and twenty leagues in a day and night. When their horses were knocked up, they killed, and sold them, if

[1] Hilda Hookham, *Tamburlane the Great,* p.166.
[2] Clavijo, p.105.
[3] *Ibid,* p.106.

they are in an inhabited country. Clavijo found many dead horses on the road which had been killed by hard riding. They generally travelled during the night to avoid heat. On the way he came across a nomadic tribe which lived in tents in the open plains, in winter as well as in summer. They had large flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, besides twenty thousands camels. They wandered with their flocks and herds, and paid a yearly tribute of three thousand camels and fifteen thousand sheep to the lord for the right of grazing in his territory. When the Spanish ambassadors came to their tents, the Chief came out and led them to a tent and gave them milk and cream according to their custom.[1]

Customs and tolls were collected at the caravan cities and at junctions of routes. The 'Iron Gate' of Darband, where the eastern spur of the Caucasus range comes down to the Caspian, was especially profitable to Timur from the point of view of its income from the customs duties. The other such point was situated between Samarqand and Balkh which was also called 'Iron Gate' of Darband. Clavijo called it 'the Grand house of the Imperial City, the pass that traverses it is a narrow cleft, where the passage seems to have been cut by the hand of man, with the mountain wall on either side rising vertical to an immense height. It is only by this one pass that all who travel up to Samarqand from India can come: nor can those who go down from the Imperial City voyaging to India travel by any other route'.

The increase in caravan traffic brought great prosperity to the artisans, craftsmen and traders of Samarqand in the time of Timur. The demand both for necessities, and luxuries increased immensely. To celebrate his victories, Timur exempted the citizens of Samarqand for several years from taxation. Just as in medieval Europe all the main highways of the continent met in Rome, almost all the trade routes of Asia converged on Samarqand. Timur lavishly spent his treasures to develop and embellish the city. There were six main roads leading out of Samarqand from the six gates of the city. Crowds in its bazaars were so dense that it was difficult to pass. Men had to move at a very slow pace while going from one part of the market

[1] *Ibid*, p. 107

to the other. A new market was built on the order of Timur who took personal interest in its construction. Masons brought from Syria, Iran and India worked shoulder to shoulder on its construction. Clavijo noticed that Samarqand was a city of greenery even within the city walls. Plane trees, white poplars and fruit trees overhung the houses, the caravanserais, the squares and the reservoirs. The city appeared as if it were part of a forest.

The suburbs of Samarqand also had orchards, groves, flower gardens and ponds in uninterrupted succession. These suburbs were named after the great cities of the Islamic world: Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, Shiraz and Sultaniya. The implication of this was that Samarqand was the greatest centre of Islamic learning and culture and possessed all that was best and noblest in the world of Islam. Water was brought by irrigation canals.[1] The network of channels brought water from the river *Zarfishan* (the gold-strewer) and supplied the reservoirs constructed in different parts of the city. In the squares of the city where the roads intersected were public buildings like caravanserais, mosques, madrasahs, shrines and places of nobles.[3] Babur has mentioned in his *Memoirs* that each trade had its own bazaar.

Chengiz Khan and other Mongol rulers hated to make defensive arrangements which they considered beneath their dignity. They staunchly believed in always taking the offensive first. They, therefore, were not required to construct fortresses or ramparts. Timur, on the other hand, turned his attention to the defences of Samarqand, the Imperial City. Under the Samanid rulers Samarqand was surrounded by a rampart which had fallen into ruin after the conquest and devastation by Chengiz Khan. By the orders of Timur the rampart was reconstructed. Clavijo described the ramparts as protected by a very deep moat. According to Babur's estimate the rampart was five miles in circumference. Clavijo also remarked that Samarqand was bigger than the Spanish city of Seville. Its population was about a hundred and fifty thousand, excluding the suburbs whose population exceeded that of the city itself.

[1] Hilda Hookham, *Tamburlane the Great,* p.174.

[2] *Ibid,* quoting Ibn-i-'Arab Shah.

Timur was a ruthless destroyer but also a builder. Stately buildings with magnificent gardens were erected at his command, villages and towns were restored, irrigation systems built and repaired. The name of Timur and his descendants represent the great epoch in the history of Islamic architecture.[1] The buildings constructed by Timur in Samarqand are Persian in style and composition but they are on a much grander scale than their Persian models. The tendency to erect huge structures is a special trait of the Islamic architecture in the post-Mongolian period.[2] At no time in the period between the domination of Chengiz Khan's descendants, who had embraced Islam, and Timur is this tendency so prominent and striking.

Timur had a liking for his suburban palaces with beautiful gardens. In his absence on campaigns these pleasances were thrown open to the inhabitants of Samarqand and even the poorest among them could enjoy their cool air and magnificent scenery. The walls of the palaces were decorated with paintings representing Timur's victories, his sons and grandsons, his amirs and his soldiery. The gardens surrounding the *Takht-i-Qarachee* palace were still more grandiose.[3] The palace was built in 1395. For its garden a stream was utilized which flowed seven *farsakh* away from Samarqand.[4] Timur carried out extensive irrigation works not only in his native country, of Mawarannahr (Transoxiana) and the neighbouring Khurasan but also in such distant regions as the northern steppes and the Kabul valley in the south.

The royal ladies and the princes were also enthusiastic for building *madrasahs,* hospices (*khanqah*) for dervishes and mosques. The imperial heir, Muhammad Sultan, built a palace and a *madrasah* to the southeast of the city of Samarqand. Timur built his largest palace known as Aq-Sarayar (White Palace) at Kesh also called Shar-i-Sabz (the Green Town), his birth-place. Kesh is situated on the northern spurs of the Hindukush, along the valley of the upper Amu-Darya: where the trade route from China branched off west for Persia, south

[1] Barthold, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*. Ch.II. p.40.
[2] D'Ohsson, *Histoire des Mongols,* IV, p.273.
[3] Barthold, Ch.II, p.41.
[4] Sharf al-Din Yazdi, *Zafar Namah,* p.12.

for India, Balkh and Kabul. The passes leading into India had formed part of the original dominions that Timur had secured after the defeat of Amir Husain. The Town of Kesh is thirty-six miles south of Samarqand. Timur's famous descendant Babur tells us in his *Memoirs* that in spring the walls and the terraces of the houses of Kesh were always green and cheerful. That is why in the times of Timur they called it Shahr-i-Sabz (the Green Town) and Babur also refers to it by the same name. It is situated in the Qashkha Darya Valley, on the main caravan route between Samarqand and Balkh, on the main highway to Khurasan and on to India. Timur insisted that the portals to this palace should be more imposing than any yet seen in Mawarannahr. The plan of the palace resembled that of the mosque which Timur later built in Samarqand, the largest mosque in Central Asia. The chief architect of the palace was a craftsman of Khwarizm who had been brought to Samarqand as a captive. He had his own team of masons and craftsmen who dressed in red robes to distinguish themselves from others. Craftsmen from other subjugated countries were set to work for a quarter of a century. The blocks used in the building contain the signatures of the architects and craftsmen working there.[1] Clavijo describes the palace as simply gorgeous. Past the huge entrance and a very high gateway, there were on both sides arches of bricks, covered with glazed tiles, in many patterns and various colours. The arches formed small recesses without doors, and the ground also was covered with glazed tiles. They were made for the attendants to sit in when the lord was there. Beyond the first entrance there was another gateway, leading to a great courtyard paved with white stones, and surrounded by doorways of very elegant workmanship. The court was three hundred paces wide having a water pool in the centre. It led to the body of the building by a very broad and lofty gateway, ornamented with gold and blue patterns on glazed tiles, richly and beautifully worked. On the top of this doorway there was the figure of a lion and a sun. Timur had adopted this insignia after the conquest of Iran. Usually,

A. Jakoubovasky, *Samarqand at the Time of Timur and the Timurids*, quoted by Hilda Hookham, *Tamburlane the Great*, p.182.

Timur adopted the insignia of the three Os, drawn in the manner ∴ to signify that he was the master of the three continents.

Another gateway led to a reception hall where the walls were panelled with gold and blue tiles and the ceiling was entirely of gold work. From this hall Clavijo was taken up into the galleries where the walls were of gilt tiles. Here he saw many apartments and separate chambers, all of which were adorned in blue and gold and many other colours. Then he was taken to a great banquet-hall which Timur was having built wherein to feast with the princesses. It was richly coloured, and beyond it they were laying out a great orchard in which were planted diverse fruit and shady trees. These stood round water basins beside which were laid out fine lawns of turf. The orchard was so big that a large company could conveniently assemble there. In summer, people enjoyed its cool air in the shade of the trees. Babur in his *Memoirs* described the palace in much the same terms.

The principal inscriptions at the main entrance to the White Palace were:

> *The Kingdom belongs to Allah,*
> *The Sultan is the Shadow of Allah on Earth!*

The mosque which Timur caused to be built was one of the most imposing structures in Samarqand. When it was finished, he thought the entrance was much too low, and ordered the mosque to be pulled down. In order that it might be sooner rebuilt, he himself took charge of one part and ordered his Meerzas to watch over the other. At this time he was infirm, and could go about neither on foot nor on horseback, but only in a litter in which he came every day, and remained there for some time. This work was stopped when it started snowing.[1]

Clavijo has given instances of Timur's justice, observing that when a great man was sentenced to death, he was hanged, but the common people were beheaded. On one occasion after the banquet the party was treated to an exhibition of Timur's

[1] Clavijo, p.166.

justice. In the palace where the traders and merchants had pitched their tents, Timur had ordered a number of gallows to be put up, and declared that in this festival, he knew how to be merciful and kind to some, and how to be severe to others. On these gallows several persons of rank were hanged, besides certain traders who had sold meat for more than it was worth and some shoe-makers for their dishonest dealings. He was not supposed to be absolute. He neither claimed nor exercised arbitrary control over the ancient customary laws of his people. He exercised judicial power with the counsel and consent of his nobles. The all-important agents of the central government throughout the provinces were the nobles, appointed by the king to act during his pleasure. Each normally combined judicial, military, financial and other executive functions within his jurisdiction. All that Timur could do was to introduce a number of minor improvements in the established procedure. Ordinarily, judicial routine was attended to by a select group of ecclesiastical officers appointed by the king. Fearless in battle, astute and ruthless in eliminating his enemies, Timur was a stickler for meting out justice without distinction of rank or class. He also showed considerable qualities of statesmanship. He frequently convoked *Kurultai* or diet of his chiefs and nobles and addressed them in a speech calculated to obtain their cordial assent for the undertaking he had in view, and to arouse the zeal and enthusiasm of his followers. In the army the leaders of the *tuman* (ten thousand), the commander of a thousand, and of a hundred were often the officers of justice and revenue in the conquered territories. By suppressing rebellions in the conquered territories, Timur felt free and unhindered to pursue his other military objectives.

The city of Samarqand had become a great centre of trade and commerce, but there was not a suitable place for the orderly and regular display of the merchandise for sale. Timur ordered that a broad street should be made in the city lining it with shops and store-houses. This street started at one end of the city, and went through to the other, traversing the whole city. He entrusted this work to two of his nobles and ordered them to have it completed as soon as possible. They began the work by pulling down such houses as stood in the

way by which Timur desired the street to run. They made the street very broad, and covered it with a vaulted roof, having windows at intervals to let in the light. As soon as the shops were finished, people were made to occupy them and sell their goods. There were fountains all along the street. To complete the work in time those who worked in the day-time were relieved by others who worked all night. Some pulled down old houses, others levelled the ground, and others built the street; and in the words of Clavijo 'day and night they made such a noise that they seemed to be like so many devils'.[1] Those whose houses were pulled down were given reasonable compensation.

During the two years from 1396 to 1398, Timur was occupied with the building activity and at the same time he had ordered preparations for his campaign against China. For this reason, as well as for dynastic considerations, he had arranged his own marriage with a Mongol princess, Tukal Khanam, and had concluded a treaty with her father, the Mongol Khan whose territory lay astride the road to China. His eldest grandson and heir, Muhammad Sultan, ruler of the eastern province of Farghana, was instructed to consolidate bases in the frontier regions, and to develop soil cultivation along the route where it had fallen into decay. Some of the most distinguished Amirs and military chiefs were allocated to the prince to enable him to perform his duties efficiently. In 1398, Timur summoned a *Kurultai* (diet of chiefs and nobles) at Samarqand to discuss his Indian campaign and to take advantage of the disputes that ensued at the death of Firoz Shah Tughlaq. Punjab was regarded as a legitimate hunting ground for a Chaghatay ruler, whose dominions extended right upto Afghanistan where Pir Muhammad, a grandson of Timur, was appointed governor. The reason advanced for invading India was that he considered the Muslim rulers of the country were lacking in true faith. His desire was to lead an expedition against them to become a *Ghazi*. In fact, the Mongol rulers did not require any special encouragement for predatory raids upon India. Early in the thirteenth century under the Delhi Sultanate, after the horsemen of Chengiz Khan had appeared on the Indus in pursuit

[1] *Ibid*, p.166.

of the Khwarizm Shah Jalaluddin who had fled to the Punjab, Chaghatays stretched into the Hindukush and the Afghan territory and had annexed the Ghurid dominions. A succession of Mongol pillaging raids continued during the reigns of Balban and 'Ala' al-Din Khalji from their bases in Afghanistan but the Delhi Sultanate survived them. For Timur or for his predecessors north-western India was regarded as an easy target for depredation and plunder. Fortunately, Delhi had so far escaped the fate of Baghdad and Damascus. Delhi still remained the centre of the Indian Muslim civilization, the store-house of Indian wealth. It was in its full glory when Timur's hordes sacked and looted the city to such an extent that for fifty years after his departure the old Indian silver and gold coins could not be seen in this part of the country. The coins struck during this half a century in Delhi were almost exclusively of copper. The resistance offered to Timur by the Tughlaq army was feeble and ineffective. In the words of the author of *Zafar Namah* 'the soldiers of India fought bravely but the frail insect cannot contend against the raging wind, nor feeble deer against the fierce lion, so they were forced to flee.'

For about two years Delhi was without a government. After the death of Mahmud Tughlaq in 1412, such administration as existed was carried on by an Afghan Amir, Daulat Khan Lodi, who did not assume the insignia of royalty. In 1414, Sayyid Khizr Khan established the Sayyid dynasty, but he styled himself as Timur's deputy even after defeating his rivals, Sultan Mahmud and Mulla Shah, who had returned to Delhi after Timur's departure, to resume their struggle for supremacy. Timur on his return journey had plundered Meerut, Kangra and Jammu. The political effect on India of Timur's invasion was that the various rulers of north-western India ostensibly declared themselves as his viceroys, but Timur himself had bestowed the dignity of his name only to Sayyid Khizr Khan whom he formally proclaimed as his deputy in the Punjab and who later occupied Delhi. Sayyid Khizr Khan introduced Timur's name on the coins and in the Friday sermon (*Khutba*), but for the rest he had to rely on his own resources and for all practical purposes functioned as an independent ruler. But the administrative machinery had so deteriorated

that during the reign of Sayyid Khizr Khan and his three successors, in all a period of thirty-seven years, campaigns were needed to realize the annual tribute from the Rajas and even from powerful *zamindars*. There were frequent rebellions fomented by the Timurid governor at Kabul and by the rulers of Malwa and Jaunpur. The last of the line of the Sayyid rulers returned to Badaun where he lived in seclusion, ultimately yielding authority to Bahlol Lodi. The Lodis ruled for the next seventy-five years down to Babur's victory in 1526.

The Sayyid dynasty was an interesting experience in the theory of Muslim kingship. Khizr Khan, the founder of the dynasty, owed his rise to Timur and could not assume independent position in all political matters. As a mark of recognition of Timur's suzerainty, the name of Timur, and after him the name of his successor, Shah Rukh, was recited in the *Khutba* and was inscribed on the coins along with his own name. Tribute was regularly sent to Timur and Shah Rukh in recognition of their paramountcy. But later on, the name of Shah Rukh ceased to be inscribed on the coins and in its place the names of Firuz Tughlaq and Mahmud Tughlaq, were inscribed on the currency as guarantee of its authenticity, although now the last Tughlaq monarch was a mere faineant and the dynasty had become defunct. The Sayyid rulers preferred to maintain, observes Nelson Wright, types of coins that had become popular and current in the recent past, altering the dates on them.[1] This represented a strange duality in the political thought and behaviour of the Sayyid rulers, and was unprecedented in the history of medieval India. This duality was needed only so long as the Sayyid power had not established its credentials. Khizr Khan's successors dropped the name of the Tughlaqs from their coins and declared themselves to be Naib-i-Amirul Mominin (Deputy of the Caliph of the Faithful). In 1428, Mubarak Shah introduced a new coinage of his own, and the Sayyid dynasty came to enjoy full suzerainty.

Timur's return to Mawarannahr from Delhi was celebrated at different stages by the royal sons and grandsons. He stayed

[1] Nelson Wright, *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi*, p.239.

at Shahr-i-sabz for two weeks, at the palace of Aq Saray. From there he went to stay some days at the palace of Takht-i-Qarachee, with its huge park which he had laid out a few years ago. From there he went to Dilkhusha Garden in the suburbs of Samarqand. In the capital he visited the Shah Zinda Shrine where many members of the royal family were buried. For a short time he visited the hospice (*Khanqah*) built by one of his queens, Saray Mulk Khanam. From there he moved to the garden of the plane trees, then to the Paradise Garden. By this time the captives and the baggage had arrived from India. The captives, elephants and plunder were paraded before the citizens of Samarqand. Before making arrangements and issuing orders for the next campaign, Timur gave orders for the construction of the grand Mosque, which was finished tastefully, the interior-surface being plastered over, into which Quranic verses and calligraphic designs were cut in. It is generally believed that Timur was much impressed by the Juma Mosque of Firuz Shah Tughlaq. Orders were issued that the best of the Indian masons and craftsmen, brought as captives to Samarqand, be employed for the construction of the Mosque. The site selected was opposite the *Madrasah* of Saray Mulk Khanam and two high officials (Amirs) were put in charge of the project. Daily reports were sent to the lord about the progress of the work. One of Bihzad's miniatures, illustrating Sharafuddin Yazdi's *Zafar Namah,* shows the masons, the craftsmen, and the elephants labouring in the construction of the Mosque. An interesting item in the painting is the master-builder holding a medal in his hand and showing it to others.[1] Timur patronized the Ulama, discussed religious problems with them, and showed great respect for the descendants of the Prophet (Sayyids). According to Hafiz Abru he concerned himself with the strengthening of the Shari'at and was interested in the study of history. This is confirmed by the account given by the historian Ibn Khaldun who met him. He took interest in medicine and astronomy, and scholars in these branches of science were also patronized by him.[2]

[1] Hilda Hookham, *Tamburlane the Conqueror,* p.203.

[2] Barthold, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia,* vol. II, pp.22-23.

In his last days Timur, the lord of the Auspicious Conjunction (Sahib Qiran), was much occupied by dynastic considerations. He nominated his grandson Prince Muhammad Sultan, governor of Farghana, to succeed him. He was the eldest son of Timur's first-born, Jahangir and had combined the blood of Timur with the royal blood of Chengiz Khan. In order to avoid any misunderstanding in the future, he had instructed that the name of his successor be included in the Friday sermon (*Khutba*) and be inscribed on coins during his lifetime. His grandson, Muhammad Sultan, was given precedence over his two surviving sons, Miran Shah and Shah Rukh. This was a piece of Timur's own creation that led to the subsequent disintegration and disruption of the empire. It was unfortunate that this arrangement had tragic consequences.

Soon after Timur's death the struggle for succession started, and after four years of strife his youngest son, Shah Rukh established his supremacy in Samarqand, while western Asia passed into the hands of Miran Shah who made Tabriz the seat of his government. The eldest son of Miran Shah, Mirza Sultan Muhammad, was at Samarqand. He does not appear to have taken any active part in politics. When visited on his death-bed by his cousin Ulugh Beg, he entrusted his son Abu Sai'd Mirza, grandfather of Babur, to his care and protection. Ulugh Beg faithfully carried out the trust, and Abu Sai'd Mirza for some time served him with loyalty and devotion. But when Ulugh Beg went to quell the rebellion of his son, Abu Sai'd Mirza occupied Samarqand. Ulugh Beg was killed by the order of his own son, though the decree for his execution is said to have borne the name of the titular Grand Khan, whose nominal suzerainty Timur had retained. The patricide next defeated Abu Sai'd Mirza and imprisoned him for his misdemeanour, but he survived for a short time and was murdered in his turn.

Shah Rukh managed to bring back a great part of the Timurid empire under his rule. He was a man of peace and avoided strife as far as possible. He had left the administration of Samarqand in the hands of his son Ulugh Beg and preferred to stay in Herat, the climate of which place suited his temperament. Shah Rukh was a patron of poets and scholars.

Hafiz Abru, whose proper name was Khwaja Nuruddin Lutfallah, was attached to the court of Timur and later he attached himself to the court of his son and successor, Shah Rukh, and of his grandson Prince Baysunqur for whom he wrote his great history, *Zubdatu'l Tawarikh* (the Cream of Histories), which was concluded in 1427, only three years before the author's death. It consisted of four volumes. Besides this history, Hafiz Abru compiled a geographical work for Shah Rukh in which he gives account of his extensive travels. He accompanied Timur in several of his campaigns and was with him at the time of the conquest of Aleppo and Damascus in 1400-1401. After Shah Rukh made Herat his seat of government, Hafiz Abru settled down in this city. His younger contemporay, Abdurrazzaq of Samarqand, made free use of Hafiz Abru's geographical work.

Shah Rukh's son, Ulugh Beg, was the governor of Samarqand. Shah Rukh breaking his promise gave Turkistan and Mawarannahr to Ulugh Beg, wresting it from Khalil Sultan. Khalil Sultan, the nominee of Timur was murdered, and his wife, Dil Shah Agha, had such a deep attachment for her husband that she stabbed herself when she learnt of her husband's death. Ulugh Beg was a man of letters and had a fine taste. He embellished Samarqand, making it what his grandfather Timur had dreamt of—the centre of learning and Muslim civilization. He built a grand mosque and a hospice with the highest dome in Samarqand and other palatial buildings. Fond of poetry, he had an official poet Khwajah 'Ismat Bukhari and was the patron of others, like Rusham Khwarizmi and Tahir 'Aliwardi. Ulugh Beg was learned, just and energetic and attained a high degree in the science of astronomy. In his reign the rank of scholars and men of learning was at its greatest. Ulugh Beg was a great mathematician and could solve the most difficult problems in geometry. But he was above all an astronomer. In 1428, he began the building of an observatory at Samarqand which in its day was regarded as one of the wonders of the world. Sabah-al-Din was the most famous astronomer. There were other astronomers like Hasan Chelibi Ghiyathuddin, called Qazizade whose son M. Chelibi wrote a commentary on the astronomical works of Ulugh Beg.

Other famous astronomers working in the observatory were Muin-al-Din Kashani and Ghiyathuddin Jamshid. Ulugh Beg invented new and powerful instruments for their joint researches. Finding that Ptolemy's computations did not agree with his own observations, he sought to interpret them by compiling *Zij-i-Jadid-i-Sultaniya,* a collection comprising diverse computations and eras, the knowledge of time, the course of the stars, the position of the planets and the fixed stars. The whole work is prefaced by a very complicated and obscure introduction. These tables became celebrated in Europe and attention was called to them by John Greaves, Professor of Oxford in 1665. Later, Hyde gave an English translation of these tables and their introduction. It is disputed when the original of the Turkish introductions were translated into Arabic and Persian. The original work was first compiled in 1437. Ulugh Beg, it seems, did not observe all the stars which he mentions and takes his latitude and longitude from Ptolemy. With Ulugh Beg, the period of astronomical observations in the Asiatic countries comes to an end.

A Russian Scientist writes about the observatory of Ulugh Beg: 'Among the astronomical instruments of the observatory, a huge quadrant was used for the accurate observation of the sun, the moon and the planets. The observatory consisted of a lofty three-storey building erected on the hill of Kukhak. Only half of the great quadrant was housed in the building itself, the lower half being underneath the observatory in a chamber carved out of the hill-side. The observatory was surrounded on all sides by gardens and was thus cut off from the dusty roads. Like all public buildings of those times, it was profusely decorated with wall-paintings and mosaics. The famous quadrant was a huge stone of 90° with a radius of 40 metres. The plane of the quadrant coincided with that of the observatory's meridian. By means of a narrow, upright slit, it divided the whole interior of the building into two halves. The quadrant was completely protected from extraneous light. In the centre of the arc on the roof of the building was a diopter, a small chink through which the rays of the planet under observation fell on the calibrated scale of the quadrant.

Apart from the quadrant, there were many other astronomical instruments in Ulugh Beg's observatory, and on the basis of the observation of the stars and planets which were carried out by means of these instruments, the famous list of the position of the stars and the tables showing the movements of the planets were compiled. These lists and tables were recognized by astronomers all over the world and served as models for such productions for a hundred years.

By reason of the vast scale on which it was conceived and the results of its observations, Ulugh Beg's observatory constituted the culminating point of astronomical science not only of the whole Muslim east, but of the whole world of those times.[1]

Ulugh Beg was not successful in war and politics, being much too absorbed in his own astronomical researches. During his governorship of Samarqand, the Uzbeks laid the country waste as far as Khojand. No prompt and efficacious steps were taken by Ulugh Beg to check their inroads, resulting in utter chaos and confusion. The sole survivor of the children of Shah Rukh, Ulugh Beg had inherited the power and sovereignty on the death of his father in 1447. He had remained inactive and undecided as to the course of action to be followed by him in political affairs, thereby enabling the other Timurid princes to intrigue against him. His own son, 'Abdul Latif, revolted against him and had him murdered soon after. 'Abdul Latif survived for a short time and then was murdered in his turn. Abu Sai'd having been released from prison, joined Abu'l Khair Khan and with his help captured Samarqand where he established his supremacy. He consolidated his rule over the whole of Mawarannahr.

Abu Sai'd planned to stay in Herat to reconquer the lands over which his grandfather Miran Shah held sway. He was a great politician. He exploited the differences between Esen Buqa, the Chaghatay ruler of Mughalistan and his elder brother Yunus Khan. He invited Yunus Khan to visit Herat, proclaimed him as the Khan of Mughalistan and promised to assist

[1] Kary-Niyazov, *Central Asian Review*, vol. *I*, 1953.

him if required. In return, Yunus Khan recognized Abu Sai'd as the rightful sovereign of Mawarannahr, so that he and his descendants might exercise all the powers and privileges of an independent ruler, without the sanction of the puppet Chaghatay Khans, the descendants of Chengiz. The *de facto* sovereignty of Abu Sai'd became *de jure* by a single stroke of diplomacy. As Yunus Khan was involved in a civil war, Abu Sai'd was left in peace to consolidate his position. In the course of an active and vigorous reign, Abu Sai'd not only subdued Mawarannahr, but extended his rule over Khurasan as far as Mekran and the hilly country of the present Afghanistan. Abu Sai'd was an able ruler and a keen warrior. He kept order in his kingdom. He had divided his kingdom among his four sons in his lifetime to ensure peace and stability after his death. Abu Sai'd was killed in an engagement in support of one tribe of Turkomans against Uzam Husain, the chief of another. Abu Sai'd was surrounded by the chieftain's army in the defiles of mountains in Azerbaijan, and perished with the greater part of his army.

On the death of Abu Sai'd the grandfather of Babur, his dominions were occupied partly by his four sons and partly by others. In the division among his sons, the eldest, Sultan Ahmad Mirza, secured the largest share of the paternal dominions, viz., Samarqand and Bukhara; Mahmud Mirza, his second son, got Badakhshan and the surrounding region of Hindukush, Asfera, Tirmiz and Hisar in the Amu-Darya basin. The third son, 'Umarshaikh Mirza, the father of Babur, continued to rule the small kingdom of Farghana or Andejan, lying on both sides of the upper course of the Sir-Darya, which he had governed in his father's lifetime. The youngest son of Abu Sai'd, Ulugh Beg, got Kabul and Ghazni, which also had been given to him by his father in his lifetime. The rich and fertile country of Khurasan, after a long series of revolutions, was at length conquered and annexed by Sultan Husain Mirza Baiqara, another great grandson of Timur, the greatest prince of the time, and an eminent patron of learning and fine arts, whose rule extended from Balkh to the Caspian Sea. He ruled over Khurasan with Herat as his capital from 1468 to 1507 and

throughout this period, as during the reign of Shah Rukh Mirza, Herat was a great and prosperous centre. Towards the end of his reign the defections of the Arghuns and the invasions of Shaibani Khan had weakened Husain Baiqara's kingdom
end of his reign the defections of the Arghuns and the invasions of Shaibani Khan had weakened Husain Baiqara's king-
dom and Herat was occupied by the Uzbeks in 1507. Timur's descendants had no ambition of world conquest. Fighting one another, they often sought help from the nomadic warriors of the steppes against their immediate neighbours.

In his *Memoirs* Babur gives an impressionistic picture of his father 'Umar Shaikh's physiognomy and character. He was a short, stout, round and fleshy-faced person. He used to wear his tunic so tight that to fasten the strings he had to draw his belly in, and if he let himself out after tying them, they often snapped. He was not particular about his dress or food. He used to wear his turban in a simple fold, although in those days people wore it generally wound in four folds without twisting, and letting the ends hang down. In his Court, he wore the Mughal Cap.

His nature was poetic though he had no talent for composing verse. He was a just ruler. Once a caravan returning from China was buried under snow in the mountains of Eastern Andijan. When 'Umar Shaikh learnt that of the entire caravan only two horses had survived, he sent his overseers to take charge of all goods. Although he was in need of money himself, he ordered a search for the heirs and got them located in Khurasan and Samarqand. And within a year or two had handed over to them all their property.

Babur's mother, Qutlugh Nigar Khanam, was a pious lady, devoted to the care of the household that was far from affluent, unlike her father Yunus Khan's (the descendant of Chengiz Khan) court at Tashkent. Yunus Khan had married three of his daughters to the sons of Abu Sai'd Mirza as a token of gratitude. Abu Sai'd Mirza had called him from exile in Persia to reign as Khan at Tashkent and the surrounding land of the Chaghatays. When Babur was born in 1483, Yunus Khan entered the valley of Farghana, to bring a

gift to his grandson, at the head of his armed clans[1]. 'Umar Shaikh hastened out a day's journey to receive him, out of respect for his father-in-law. 'Often indeed', Babur related later on, 'he ('Umar Shaikh) had to call in his wife's father to aid in his troubles. And each time he gave to Yunus Khan some piece of territory, even Tashkent (the Stone City) itself, which had once belonged to the prince, my father.' Tashkent being the bone of contention between Sultan Husain Mirza and 'Umar Shaikh, the two brothers agreed to hand it over to their father-in-law, Yunus Khan. But this time Yunus Khan appeared in an affectionate mood as head of the family.

At the time of the first customary shaving of Babur's head Yunus Khan had bestowed gifts on the child and named him unwillingly as Babur, because the Mongols could not pronounce the name, Zahiruddin Muhammad, properly. Yunus Khan exclaimed that the boy was a little tiger, Babur, the Tiger, and it was under this nickname that this descendant of both Chengiz Khan and Timur, came to be known in history.

With his elder brother Sultan Ahmed Mirza, 'Umar Shaikh's relations were particulraly hostile. In the first place, the restless 'Umar Shaikh coveted the possessions of his elder brother, and was all the time plotting to get them. Sultan Ahmed Mirza invaded Farghana with a powerful force, and wanted to annex it to his own dominions. Between the two brothers there was a constant contention for the possession of Tashkent and Shahrukhia, the contest was unequal on account of the superiority of Sultan Ahmad Mirza in material resources. and Babur's maternal grandfather Yunus Khan came to 'Umar Shaikh's

[1] Babur's geneology on the father's side was: Babur the son of Sultan 'Umar Shaikh Mirza, the son of Sultan Abu Sai'd Mirza, the son of Sultan Muhammad Mirza, the son of Mirza Miran Shah, the son of Amir Timur.

On the mother's side, it was: Qutlugh Nigar Khanam, the daughter of Yunus Khan, the son of Weis Khan, the son of Shir Ali Khan, the son of Muhammad Khwajah Khan, the son of Khizr Khwaja Khan, the son of Tughluq Timur Khan, the son of Esan Bugha Khan, the son of Dawa Chichan, the son of Barak Khan, styled Ghiasuddin, the son of Sukar, the son of Kamgar, the son of Chaghatay, the son of Chengiz Khan (Erskine vol. I, p.78).

rescue. He played the part of a mediator and made the peace. The parties agreed to hand over the lands in dispute including the cities of Tashkent and Shahrukhia to 'Umar Shaikh.

Farghana, as Babur later described, was a beautiful country, abundantly supplied with running water and extremely pleasant in spring. Its gardens and orchards were full of tulips and roses. It abounded in corn and fruits, particularly peaches, apricots, almonds, melons, and pomegranates. Melons, fresh or preserved, were an important item of Turki diet. Babur considered the Akshi melons to be the best in the world. Babur also relished the almond-stuffed dried apricots found in Marghinan further up the valley. Khojend, where the caravan track neared the river Sir, was famous for its juicy pomegranates, and there was fine turquoise to be found in the hills. Game was plentiful. The pheasants of Farghana were so fat that four persons could dine on one and not finish it. But the country was small and its resources were just sufficient to maintain four thousand troops.

'Umar Shaikh Mirza was ambitious and adventurous by temperament. He often set out for raids into the neighbouring dominion of Samarqand, ruled by his elder brother Sultan Ahmed. After the death of his father-in-law Yunus Khan, he continued his pillaging invasions. Sultan Ahmad and his brother-in-law Sultan Mahmud Khan of Tashkent who had entered into an alliance, decided to divide Farghana between themselves, and marched in the spring of 1494 into the dominion of 'Umar Shaikh Mirza who prepared to put up a desperate resistance.

At this critical juncture occurred the accident which actually was to save Farghana: 'Umar Shaikh Mirza had deep interest in the breeding and training of tumbler pigeons. One day in Akshi he entered a pigeon-cote which was built on the edge of a precipice. The pigeon-cote gave way under him immediately on 8 June, 1494. Babur relates in his *Memoirs*: 'A very strange thing happened. The pigeon house fell down the cliff with its pigeons and 'Umar Shaikh who took his flight to the other world.' And he further writes: 'That month at twelve years of age, I became king of Farghana.' Babur's half brothers,

Jahangir Mirza and Nasir Mirza, were respectively two years and four years younger. When the news of 'Umar Shaikh's death reached Andijan, Babur was immediately proclaimed king and the *begs* and *amirs*, knowing how precarious the position was, prepared for defence. In the meanwhile, an embassy was sent on behalf of Babur to his uncle Sultan Ahmad Mirza with the message that Babur regarded himself as his son and servant and would be glad to govern the country as Sultan Ahmad's regent. He promised not to dispute his authority over the rest of the kingdom. But the latter's ministers rejected the proposal and the army continued to advance. Sultan Ahmad wanted to take revenge on Babur, unable to forget the war waged by Umar Shaikh. He also hoped to take full advantage of Babur's being a child to appropriate his kingdom. Another turn of events came, when while his army was crossing a muddy river the bridge collapsed and many horses and camels fell into the swamp and perished. Then an epidemic of distemper broke out among the animals, and Sultan Ahmad was compelled by force of circumstances to call off the campaign. While returning to Samarqand he himself was seized with fever and died. Babur's maternal uncle, Mahmud Khan, who was besieging the fortress of Akshi, fell ill too, and was constrained to return to his country. He was profoundly discouraged by the news of Sultan Ahmad's withdrawal and death and also by the desperate resistance of the garrison under the leadership of the young Jahangir Mirza. Mahmud Khan took advantage of his illness to withdraw with grace. Thus the dismemberment of Farghana was averted, leaving Babur 'like a pebble rocked on the beach'. Yet he enjoyed the loyalty of the chiefs and nobles, who had held fiefs under 'Umar Shaikh, and which he turned to good account.

After Sultan Ahmad's death the affairs of Samarqand fell in disorder. Incessant warfare started among the chiefs and nobles. Babur's chiefs regained some towns and forts which had been lost after 'Umar Shaikh's death. Then they set out with the thirteen-year-old Babur as their leader towards Samarqand, but as great scarcity of provisions prevailed everywhere and as the winter was fast approaching, the campaign was postponed to the next year. In 1497, Babur's army advanced

again in the direction of Samarqand and captured many towns and forts. The siege of Samarqand lasted seven months before Baisanghar, the son of Sultan Ahmad, with two or three hundred hungry and underclothed men fled from the city and Babur was welcomed by the *begs* and chief townsmen of Samarqand. Babur was much impressed by palaces, gardens and baths in the capital of his great ancestor Timur. It exercised such a fascination on him that it lasted throughout his whole life, prompting him to undertake its conquest more than once. As in the case of 'Umar Shaikh, Babur's dreams also had been associated with Samarqand and its glory and splendour. Its possession was a prestige symbol for him. He writes about it: 'In the whole inhabitable world there are few cities so pleasantly situated as Samarqand....I directed its walls to be paced round the ramparts, and found that it was five miles in circumference.' He mentions with special interest the observatory of Ulugh Beg and his Astronomical Tables which were followed in his time. Then he observes: 'Samarqand is a wonderfully fine city. One of the distinguishing peculiarities is that each trade has its own bazaar: so that different trades are not mixed together in the same place. The established customs and regulations are good. The bakers shops are excellent, and the cooks are skilful. The best paper in the world comes from Samarqand....Another product of Samarqand is crimson velvet, which is exported to all quarters.'

Instead of exacting taxes from the people, they had 'to be given corn and supplies to enable them to carry on till the harvest.' Babur had little to give his soldiers except hardship. The Mongol soldiery began to desert him and even the troops from Farghana with the most important chiefs, returned home. These chiefs proclaimed Babur's younger brother Jahangir as king of Farghana. They refused to surrender the capital Andijan. Babur's mother apprised him of the ugly developments that had taken place in Farghana, calling on him to hasten with his remaining soldiery to retrieve the situation. Unfortunately, just at this moment he fell ill seriously, but recouped soon after. This period is known as Babur's hundred days' rule in Samarqand. On being apprised of the news from Farghana, Babur left Samarqand with his small army and

headed towards Andijan which, during his absence, had been occupied by Syed Ali Mirza.

Now Babur was a homeless exile, having lost both Samarqand and Farghana. Only about three hundred followers of all ranks stuck to him 'voluntarily choosing a life of exile and hardship', all the others having left him. When he reached Khojend, he could not even maintain these three hundred men. He confesses that he became a prey to melancholy and vexation, not knowing what to do. Then his mother and grandmother joined him. As the widow and daughter of Yunus Khan, the Elder Khan, they had many important connections. Babur's maternal uncle, Sultan Mahmud Khan of Tashkent, sent a detachment of Mongols of the pastoral steppes to help him tide over his difficulties. Some of the loyal *begs* of Babur started recruiting troops in the monutainous region, known for their valour and endurance. When the news spread that Babur was gathering forces to fight for his heritage, the people, discontended with the arbitrary rule of Syed Ali Mirza, became restive and drove out his governors from the forts, opening their doors to Babur's envoys. Several military engagements between Babur and the partisans of his brother Jahangir Mirza resulted in Babur's complete victory and Andijan was occupied by him without opposition. 'Thus by the grace of the Most High I recovered my paternal kingdom, of which I had been deprived for nearly two years.' Jahangir Mirza offered unconditional submission to Babur who treated him with brotherly cordiality and consideration. Babur now set to work to organise his resources to consolidate his position. After his return from Samarqand, the first period of his life closes. He was determined to seat himself upon the throne of his ancestor Timur by capturing Samarqand again.

In May, 1497 Babur took the road to Samarqand, leaving Auzun Hasan and Ali Dost Taghai in charge of the administration of his kingdom of Farghana. Sultan Baysunqar Mirza and his brother Sultan Ali Mirza were at cross purposes, each trying to oust the other. This gave Babur an opportunity to undertake his adventurous campaign. When Babur's scouting parties appeared near Samarqand, the armies of the two brothers were confronting each other. Baysunqar Mirza, dumb-

founded at the unexpected aproach of Babur's army, retired in confusion. Joining forces with Sultan Ali Mirza Babur advanced on Samarqand. Most of Baysunqar Mirza's Mongol troops took service with Babur. Babur was a stern disciplinarian. He severely punished those Mongol troops who were guilty of behaving brutally to humble village elders. During the advance to Samarqand some of the Mongol troops plundered the traders who had come to the camp to sell their wares. Again Babur gave them a lesson. In his *Memoirs* he observes: 'But such was the discipline of our army, that an order to restore everything having been given, the first watch of the next day had not passed before nothing, not a tag of cotton, not a broken needle's point, remained in the possession of any man of the force; all was back with its owners.'

Babur laid siege to Samarqand in 1500, which dragged on through the hot weather. Outside Samarqand, the chiefs, headed by the Tarkhans, met him and paid homage. Sultan Ali, through his mother, made a frantic appeal to Shaibani Khan, leader of the Uzbeks, to come to his rescue. Shaibani Khan, also known as Shahi Beg, was the grandson of Abul Khair, the prince who organised the Uzbek tribes into a confederacy in the north-western steppes. Shaibani Khan conquered all the Timurid possessions in Turkistan. He and his Uzbek forces occupied Samarqand which was surrounded by Sultan Ali Mirza. Babur was obliged to retreat. He was advised by Muhammad Murad Tarkhan, and the chiefs and nobles who had invited him to invade Samarqand, to go ahead and defeat Shaibani Khan, not allowing him to establish himself in Samarqand as its ruler after the murder of Sultan Ali Mirza. It was resolved that as Shaibani Khan had only lately got possession of Samarqand, and the inhabitants had not yet, probably, become reconciled to the Uzbeks, that Babur should make an attempt to take the place, and that it was part of his hereditary dominions, it seemed likely the people would not be very active in opposing him. It was thought that the possession of the city would improve his affairs. Babur accordingly marched back to Samarqand and coming round to the Firoza Gate, his party fell upon the guard and either killed or dispersed them. Babur's party consisting of two hundred and forty men

entered the city and proclaimed his name, as they passed through the streets, giving an opportunity to all those who disliked the Uzbeks to join them. Shaibani Khan, not knowing Babur's strength and realising that many men in Samarqand had joined him, passed out through the opposite gate with his Uzbek troops, and fled to Bukhara, while Samarqand quietly submitted to Babur. Babur observes about his entry in Samarqand: 'To give us honourable meeting on the road were nobles and braves, one after the other......Thus by God's favour were the town and the country of Samarqand taken and occupied.'

The conquest of Samarqand for the second time was one of those most daring exploits of Babur which secured him the fame he deserved. Not only the people of Samarqand, but the whole countryside came over to Babur. The Uzbek governors and garrisons were either expelled from the neighbouring fortresses or put under restraint. Most of them declared for Babur and acknowledged his authority. They all fraternized with Babur's men, congratulating them with great joy. Shaibani Khan observed the good fortune of Babur from Bukhara where he could choose his own opportunity to strike a return blow at him. Babur's triumph was complete even though the resources at his disposal were meagre. The city was *en fete* and all the important citizens of Samarqand waited on him to demonstrate their allegiance as he sat in the beautiful Garden Palace. In his *Memoirs* he observes: 'For almost one hundred and forty years Samarqand had been the capital of my family. A foreign robber coming the Lord knows from where, had seized the sceptre that dropped from our hands. God most High now restored it, and gave me back my plundered desolated land.'

Shaibani Khan made military preparations in Bukhara to oust Babur from Samarqand. Babur on his part was well aware of his designs. He despatched ambassadors and messengers, one after the other, to all the Khans, Sultans, Amirs and Chiefs to request their aid and assistance. These messengers kept going back and forth without intermission, warning the rulers of Central Asia about the growing strength of Shaibani Khan. Some of these rulers sent only small detachments, and so he had to rely mainly on his own resources. The Timurid princes, who were all contending for power, did not pay any heed to

Babur's overtures. When Shaibani Khan advanced towards Samarqand, Babur confonted him in battle array but Shaibani's troops turning his flank, attacked his entrenched forces from the rear. Babur's troops were surrounded and routed. Babur with his nearest followers plunged into the river, and succeeded in swimming across with the horses, seeking protection in Samarqand. Shaibani Khan laid siege to this city where famine and distress prevailed since no supplies could enter. After nearly five months' siege, Shaibani agreed to accept Babur's capitulation. Babur's eldest sister, Khanzadeh Begum, was captured and married to Shaibani Khan. This information is based on Babur's cousin, Haider Mirza's narrative in the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*. Babur speaks unwillingly and in a few words of this capitulation. Haider Mirza definitely says that the marriage of Khanzadeh Begum with Shaibani Khan was one of the articles of the treaty entered into between Babur and Shaibani Khan according to which Babur was allowed to leave Samarqand unmolested. Khanzadeh had a son by Shaibani Khan. Later Shaibani divorced her and married her to one of his chiefs.

Babur escaped from Samarqand at night and got entangled among the canals of the river Soghd. He lost his way and after encountering many difficulties passed Khwajah Khizr about dawn. While on the road, just for the sake of amusement and fun he had a race with Qamber Ali Qasim Beg in which his horse got the lead. This shows the typical character of Babur that even in adversity he did not lose confidence in himself and preserved his courage and humour. After losing Samarqand for the second time, Babur became a fugitive, going from one town to another. At Dizak he speaks of nice fat flesh, well-baked bread of fine flour, delicious melons and excellent grapes in the greatest profusion, thus passing from extreme want and famine to abundance, and from days of hardship to security and enjoyment. He adds that it had been his lot, four or five times in the course of his life, to pass in a similar situation, from distress and suffering to enjoyment and ease; but this was the first time that he had been so circumstanced, and most keenly felt the transition from the injuries inflicted by his enemies and the pangs of absolute hunger to the satisfaction of security and the delight of plenty. Having rested and enjoyed

himself in Dizak, the party proceeded to Uritippa which was held by Muhammad Husain Mirza Dughlat, the husband of Babur's aunt. As Farghana was in the hands of his younger brother Jahangir and his Beg, Sultan Ahmad Tambal, Muhammad Husain Mirza Dughlat agreed to assign the district of Dehkat for Babur's winter quarters. He and his followers lived in the house of the peasants and shepherds. Babur lived in the house of the headman of the place who was seventy or eighty years old. His mother was still alive, and had attained an extreme old age, being at this time a hundred and eleven. One of the relations of the old lady had accompanied the army of Timur when he invaded northern India. The old lady often related to Babur stories about the wonders of India which most probably took root in Babur's imagination and created an ardent desire, he tells us later on, to visit that distant land. The realization of his dream led to the most celebrated achievement of his life. While Babur was in Dehkat, he was accustomed to walk barefoot all about the hills and dales. His feet became so hardened that he did not mind rock or stone in the least. This training fitted him more easily to endure and surmount the hardships of his future life. Now Babur began to reflect upon his wretched situation. It was evident that to continue to wander as an exile on barren mountains, without horse or home, could lead to nothing.

In 1502 Babur went to Tashkent, to his maternal uncle, Mahmud Khan. He considered it beneath his dignity to appear before his uncle with only a couple of attendants. He regarded it as fortunate that this did not happen among strangers but his own kinsmen. He found the customs at the Mongol court to be different from those in practice at the court of the Timurid rulers. He had hardly any presents to offer to his uncle; instead he presented him a quartrain which he had just composed:

No one remembers him who is in adversity,
A banished man cannot indulge his heart in happiness.
My heart is far from joy in this exile;
However brave, an exile has no pleasure.

Babur was treated as a poor relative and endured such vexations and misery that life became burdensome for him. He argued within himself whether it would not be far better for him to flee from the sight of man, than expose himself to such distress and humiliation. It was suggested to Babur by a friend that he should go to Turkistan to visit his other uncle, Ahmad Khan and to apprise him of the necessity of joining all forces against the rising ambitions of Shaibani Khan before he succeeded in reducing all the Timurid princes, under his sway. Mahmud Khan and his wife, Shah Begam, first agreed to the proposed plan of Babur, but on reflection it occurred to them that he had asked leave to go as a result of the poor reception that had been given him. Besides, Mahmud Khan had received information from his brother that he might visit Tashkent, as the rapid success of Shaibani Khan had necessitated joint action by the brothers with all their forces against him. This put an end to Babur's project. When Ahmad Khan arrived close to Tashkent, Mahmud Khan, his wife, Shah Begam, and Babur set out to meet him between Tashkent and Seiram; the party welcomed Ahmad Khan who presented Babur with a dress of honour, and one of his own horses newly saddled. Babur describes this as consisting of a Mongol cap, embroidered with gold thread; a long piece of China satin ornamented with flowered needlework; a cuirass of Chinese work, of the old fashion, with a whetstone and a purse-pocket: from one side of this purse-pocket hung three or four articles, such as a perfume case and its bag, with other trinkets, such as Eastern ladies wear round their necks, while as many dangled on the other side. When Babur returned dressed in all this Mongol finery, even his intimate friends could not recognize him and asked what Mongol Sultan had arrived.

Mahmud Khan, seated under an awning erected for the occasion, received his brother—the ceremony impressed Babur very much, as he has himself described. The younger Khan advanced right towards his brother, and on coming near him in front, turned to the left of the elder Khan (Mahmud Khan), making a complete circle round him, till he was again in front, when he alighted, and, on coming to the distance at which

Kurnish is performed, he knelt nine times, and then went up and embraced him; the elder Khan, as his brother came near, standing up and embracing him in turn; they stood a long time clasping each other in their arms. The younger Khan, while returning again, knelt nine times; and when he presented his tributary offerings, again knelt several times, after which he went and sat down. All the younger Khan's men were dressed in the Mongol fashion, in rich clothes, such as had been presented to Babur, with their horses caparisoned in singular style.

The two Khans soon resolved to attack Sultan Ahmad Tambol who, in the name of Babur's younger brother, Jahangir, had assumed administrative authority. The army under the Khans, which amounted to thirty thousand men, crossed the chain of hills that bounds Akshi on the west. To create a diversion Babur was sent with a detachment of Mongol soldiery to cross the river, proceed towards Ush and Urkend, and to engage in the rear Tambol, who was said to have collected his forces in Akshi. Babur captured Ush, Urkend, on the Kashghar frontier and Marghinan, one after the other, expelling Tambol's garrisons which then joined the winning side of Babur. Tambol's troops got disheartened and began to desert his camp. While advancing towards Andijan, Babur met the main body under Tambol himself, and was wounded in the right thigh. Tambol from horseback gave a full sabre blow on the head which stunned him. Babur thought it advisable to retreat and extricate himself by plunging into a deep stream which he came across in his flight. With two or three of his men who joined him, Babur reached Ush. From here the two Khans pursued Tambol closely and advanced to Andijan. Babur joined them and it was here that the elder Khan, Mahmud Khan, communicated his intention to Babur to assign the whole of Farghana to his younger brother, Ahmad Khan, after defeating Tambol. The pretence was that the younger Khan, coming from a distance, should possess Andijan as a convenient station for himself and his troops, and near enough at hand to enable him to act against Shaibani Khan. After the defeat of Tambol and Shaibani Khan, Samarqand was to be given to Babur. The

younger Khan insisted on Babur being treated by his own surgeon. Babur writes in his *Memoirs*:

> I went on and saw my uncle, the little Khan. At my first meeting with him, I had gone up to him before he had time to dismount. It was rather unceremonious. This time I got even nearer to him, when he ran out beyond the tentropes, I was walking with difficulty because of the wound in my leg. He hugged me, saying "Brother they are talking about you as a hero." Taking my arm he led me into his tent. It was rather small, and, far from neat. It was like a raider's, with melons, grapes, and stable gear piled around his sitting place. ....When I returned to my own camp, he sent his Mogul surgeon to treat my wound. This one was wonderfully skilled, and was called little Father of Physicians. If a man's brain had oozed out, he could have prescribed for it. He told me of many remarkable cures which surgeons in civilized parts could not match. The wound in my thigh he bandaged with dried fruit skins, bound in the skin of a fox's leg.

The cure of the wound was so remarkable that Babur was riding again in a few days and could resume his campaign along with his uncles against Shaibani Khan. Again his uncles gave him a strong reinforcement and set him off to storm the citadel of Akshi, while they waited at Andijan.

In the meanwhile, the two Khans pressed on Andijan and besieged it. Tambol solicited Shaibani Khan's aid at Samarqand and offered to hold Farghana under him as his sovereign. Shaibani readily accepted the offer and marched without delay to expel the invaders. On hearing of his march the Khans abandoned the siege of Andijan. Shaibani advanced with lightning speed and defeated the Khans who were taken prisoners. Shaibani had a sense of gratitude towards Mahmud Khan who had given him asylum fifteen years earlier. He, therefore, set free both Khans to return home to their steppes. Ahmad Khan felt the shame of defeat so much that he died within a few months. It is said of him that when his doctor suspected that he had been poisoned by Shaibani, and wanted to give him some antidote, he answered: 'Yes, Shaibani has poisoned me. That man who rose from the lowest dunghill to

the highest rank took me prisoner and then dared to set me free; If you know an antidote, against that kind of poison, give it to me.' Mahmud Khan, on his way to Tashkent, was slain along with his sons by the Chaghatay Mongols on account of their disaffection.

Babur, who had somehow managed to escape after the battle in which both Khans were captured, fled into the mountain ranges in the south of Farghana with a few followers. His mother and his family, and a few men-at-arms who still adhered to him, found a precarious refuge for themselves. For about a year Babur and his party wandered as fugitives and outlaws among the mountain shepherds, experiencing great distress and hardships, hunted from village to village and from forest to mountain.

His partisans dwindled everyday. The news that Shaibani had defeated and killed the *Begs* who were his enemies and had forced him to flee was poor consolation, as now the whole of Farghana had become Shaibani's possession. Moreover, Shaibani was already making incursions into the lands of the Amu-Darya basin, the only escape route open to Babur. Babur held a consultation with his small but devoted band. The prospects were dreary and dark. The kingdoms of Samarqand and Bukhara, which had so long been held by his family, and the former which he had himself twice occupied for a brief space of time, were now in the hands of Shaibani. The territories of his two maternal uncles and the kingdom of Farghana shared the same fate. He realized full well that further opposition to the Uzbek chief was hopeless, and he could not continue to roam about as an adventurer as he was all the time being pursued. He and his followers were so destitute that most of them were on foot wearing brogues of raw hide as shoes, in tattered clothes, with clubs in their hands. He observes: 'We were so poor that we had only two tents. My own I gave to my mother; and at every halt they put up for me a felt tent on crossed poles in which I took up my quarters.'

Babur's intention had been to go to Herat, the mightiest of all the Timurid Kingdoms in the hope of inducing Sultan Husain Baiqara, its sovereign, to take up arms against Shaibani. Sultan Husain Baiqara was Babur's sole surviving uncle, a

very learned man, patron of artists, poets and scientist alike. His court at Herat had become a great centre of learning and culture. Distant from the scene of strife, its people were fond of an easy, soft life. Babur thought that Sultan Husain Baiqara would have sense enough to perceive the peril in the growing power of Shaibani Khan, drawing nearer to Herat after the conquest of Farghana and sent him a message. Babur had written similar letters from Samarqand to which there were no replies. The old man reacted unfavourably and said that his line of fortresses was sufficient to check Shaibani's attack. Babur was deeply disappointed to hear this reply from the most powerful and resourceful of Timurid princes. He brooded over 'the strange and long-winded letter' of his uncle. He writes: 'then it came into my mind that I should turn my back on Farghana, and go anywhere rather than hang on like this without a foothold.' He resolved to ride towards the kingdom of Kabul which was separated from the other kingdoms of the Timurids by the mountain ranges of Hindukush. It was assigned to his uncle Ulugh Khan. After the latter's death, his son, 'Abdur Razzaq, had been deposed by an usurper, Muhammad Muqim. 'Abdur Razzaq had appealed to Babur to help him regain the throne. So now Babur led his troops to oust the usurper. He was determined that this new land beyond the Hindukush would not merely be a refuge in the mountains but a land where he would settle down and plant gardens as he had seen done at Samarqand. At Badakhshan he was told that the place abounded in lapis-lazuli and rubies. On the way, a detachment of the usurper's troops was completely routed and Babur proceeded to Kabul, investing the town and the castle. Muhammad Muqim, the usurper, surrendered the fortress after a few days' siege. Muqim was allowed to march out of the fortress the next morning, unmolested with his family, goods and household troops towards Tibah, where he arrived in safety. Babur soon after conquered Ghazni and its neighbouring territory.

Babur is full of praise for the climate of Kabul, the capital of his newly founded kingdom. 'The climate is so delightful, nothing is to be known like it anywhere in the world. In the nights of summer you cannot sleep except under a lambskin

wrap. Although deep snow falls in the winter, the cold is never exceedingly severe. Samarqand and Tabriz are celebrated for their fine climate, but the cold up there is really extreme.' He also speaks of the central position of Kabul. It was the centre of Caravan trade which consisted chiefly of horses and other merchandise. Kabul was an excellent market, said he, because even if the merchants journeyed as far as Rum (Turkey) or Khita (China) they could make no greater profits than the three or four hundred per cent they made here! He counts up the articles of trade that came from India: slaves, good white cloth, sugar-candy, refined and plain sugar, with spice-yielding roots. The caravans from India brought every year eight to ten thousand horses and twenty thousand pieces of cloth. All caravans had to pay transit duty which was a rich source of income to the exchequer.

Babur investigated the local fruits available in the neighbourhood of Kabul, with fond memories of the melons and grapes of Farghana. He divided the yield into products of the hot and cold areas of his uphill and downhill kingdom. In the cold, grapes, pomegranates, apricots, peaches, pears, apples, quinces, jujubes, almonds, and walnuts. In the hot weather: orange, citron, and sugar-cane from the Indus region. Later on, he imported sour-cherry trees for his orchards planted in Kabul which thrived well, and he also tried out sugar-cane which did not do well. The melons, he admitted, were not so good. And the bee-hives did not yield much honey, except in the western parts. Kabul lacked in grain, which could only be had from the hill tribes. This presented a perennial problem for the national economy of his kingdom and consequently he was forced by circumstances to subdue the tribal people. Kabul abounded in rich pastures and was remarkable for its profusion of flowers. It was rich in wool-yielding flocks of sheep. The height of the mountains, and the sudden descent of the land on the east, made it easy at all seasons to have a change of climate, and in some instances, to pass from summer heat to winter snow in the course of a few hours.

After consolidating his rule in Kabul, Babur proceeded to reward the chiefs and their followers, who had assisted him in the military expeditions. His brother Jahangir, despite his

treacherous conduct in the past, was given Ghazni. His youngest brother, Nasir Mirza, was granted the fief of Lamghan. To other chiefs he allotted different districts of the kingdom for their maintenance, while the inferior officers and soldiery were granted assignments of land and other rewards.' Abdur Razzaq Mirza, the son of Babur's uncle Ulugh Beg, who had been ousted from his heritage by an usurper submitted to Babur and waited upon him. He was also granted a suitable assignment. These arrangements were meant to buttress his newly-founded kingdom.

Babur took up his abode near the citadel of Kabul by a fountain near the plane trees. He immensely enjoyed its cool air and the view over the meadows and the lake which was three miles around. One of the scholars in his entourage wrote a verse in praise of the citadel:

Drink wine in this hold of Kabul—send the cup round.
For Kabul is mountain, town, river and plain in one.

In answer Babur struck off:

The flavour of wine to a drinker is known,
To a sober head, how can it be known?

Babur added another tribute to Kabul: 'From Kabul you can go in a single day to a place where snow never falls, and in two astronomical hours you can also reach a place where snow never melts, except at times in a particularly hot summer'. (*Memoirs*)

It did not take Babur long to realize that his kingdom was too poor to provide food and clothes to satisfy the numerous relatives and followers. He needed more grain, more cattle, more clothing for his men who had helped him gain the kingdom of Kabul. He well realized that if he failed to satisfy them they might leave him. Babur knew that some of his chiefs, irked by his disciplinary measures, plotted to discard the strong Babur in favour of the weak Jahangir. They wanted to send Babur off on some pretext with a few followers and to proclaim

his younger brother Jahangir Mirza king, Jahangir being always responsive and amenable to such intrigues. But this time Jahangir himself informed Babur about it who appreciated his brother's loyalty. Babur did not take any action against the schemers because he did not want to create dissension at a time when the Uzbeks were still on the prowl beyond the northern passes, and one could never be sure of Shaibani Khan's intensions. The plotters never again dared to project any treacherous scheme. Babur was not like other weak and spineless Timurid princes to be overruled by their *Begs* and their advisers. His Vizier, Baqi, although a very assertive person, became obedient and submissive. He had joined Babur in Hissar when he was a fugitive, in the expectation of finding a ready tool for his own ambition. After the conquest of Kabul he assumed the role of Vizier (Chief Minister), commander of the guards, and governor of Kabul. Babur had assigned to him the transit duties of the caravans as well as property tax from large mountainous areas. When he adopted an overbearing posture vis-a-vis Babur, he was made to resign. Babur never allowed other ministers, whom he appointed from time to time, to become too powerful and to threaten his authority and position. He dealt with all important problems himself personally. He consulted others but acted according to his own will and inclination.

Jahangir proved to be a faithless and unreliable brother. Babur had pardoned his lapses and treacheries several times. He had been assigned the government of Ghazni but under the influence of some of his malicious *begs* he tried to establish himself as an independent ruler, in the hilly frontier district in the north-east, with the help of the Hazara tribes whom he had won over to his side. Another brother of Babur, Nasir Mirza, had gone north through the passes with his household guards on the flimsy excuse of leading a rising against the Uzbeks who occupied that territory. He too desired to become an independent ruler. Before Babur could decide what to do about his brothers, an urgent call came from Herat, from his uncle Sultan Husain Baiqara, the greatest of the living Timurids, who had turned a deaf ear three times to Babur's request for help against Shaibani Khan. Now the ruler of Herat was afraid that

his own kingdom was being menaced—after the occupation of Khwarizm by the Uzbeks, Shaibani Khan had turned his attention towards Khurasan. Babur immediately responded to the appeal of Sultan Husain Baiqara, on whose kingdom had fallen the foul shadow of the Uzbek marauders.

Sultan Husain Baiqara's long reign of thirty-seven years was a period of development in all directions. Jami, the poet and mystic, Bihzad the painter, Mir Shir Ali, mystic and Turki poet, gave lustre to his reign. Herat was a great emporium of eastern trade and merchants from all over the Islamic world thronged its inns and bazaars. Babur desired to help Sultan Husain Baiqara to save his capital from the inroads of the Uzbeks. Although he was anxious on account of the rebellious postures of his two brothers, he decided to proceed towards Herat. With Samarqand, Khwarizm, Andijan and Kunduz in his hands, the occupation of Herat would have made Shaibani the master of all the Timurid centres of culture and material power and a permanent element in the demography and economy of central Asia and Khurasan.

Sayjid Afzal brought the message of Sultan Husain Baiqara to Babur at the Char Bagh. He immediately decided to go to Herat: 'It was right', says he, 'on many counts for us to march to Khurasan. One count: when a great ruler sitting in Lord Timur's place had called up his men and lords and sons, it was right that I should go against such a foe as Shaibani Khan. If others needed to go afoot, I should go even on my head; if others took up clubs, I should take up a stone! Another count: Prince Jahangir had shown himself hostile, and it was necessary either to quiet his anger or to repel his aggression.' (*Memoirs*)

Babur knew that by leaving Kabul at that juncture he was taking a risk for his kingdom. He had brought his new, uncouth land into some sort of order and had quieted for a time the predatory tribes. Babur had received his uncle's message invoking his help in the spring of 1506. He had to make a journey of five hundred miles with his meagre resources, along the flank of the Uzbeks. Leaving Kabul and Ghazni to the care of some trustworthy officers, he set out on the road to the west. On the way to Herat he came to know of the death of Sultan Husain Baiqara whose character resembled that of Babur in

many ways. He gives a vivid picture of his chief traits of character in his inimitable style. He also received a message to continue his journey to Herat. He notes in his *Memoirs*:

> Sultan Husain Baiqara, the prince was born in 842 (1438 A.D.) at Herat. His mother was the Happy Princess, a great grand-daughter of Lord Timur. He was thus of high birth on both sides, a ruler of royal descent. He had slanted eyes and a lion's body, tapering down from the waist. Even when he was old, with a white beard, he wore gay garments of red and green silk. Usually he wore a lambskin cap or broad-brim felt. But on feast days he rigged up a turban of three folds, badly wound, with a heron's plume stuck up in it, to go to prayers. When he first gained the rule of Herat, he took it into his head that he would have the names of the Twelve Imams recited in the public prayer, instead of his own. But Ali the Lion Lord and some others dissuaded him. After that, he had everything important done by orthodox law. Yet because of a stiffness in his joints he could not make the kneeling in prayer. He was lively and pleasant with a quiet temper and words to match it. He respected the religious law; once he delivered up one of his own sons who had slain a man, to the avengers of blood, to be taken before the judge. For six or seven years after he took the throne he tasted no wine; later on, he sank into the drinking habit. Then he drank everyday after the noon prayer; he would not drink before it. His sons and soldiery drank likewise, pursuing vice and pleasures of their own.
>
> Bold he was and daring. In combat he would get to work with his own sword. No one of Lord Timur's line matched him in the slashing of swords. He also had a love for poetry, and even put together a *divan* signed with his pen name. Husaini. Many of the prince's couplets were not bad. but he used the same measure without change all through. Although he was great as a ruler over wide dominions, like little people he kept fighting rams, flew pigeons, and fought cocks. He swam over the Wolf Water (a small river by the Caspian) in his guerilla days and came out of the water to give a party of Uzbeks a good beating. Again, with sixty men he fell on

three thousand sent by Prince Sultan Abu Sa'yid to surprise him, and gave them a really good beating. This was his outstanding feat of arms.

His country consisted of Khurasan, with Balkh to the east, the Garden and Damghan to the west, Khwarizm to the north, Qandahar and Sistan to the south. After he had Herat in his hands he devoted all his time by day and by night to ease and pleasure. Nor was there a man of his who did not do likewise, giving up to sport and rioting. From this it came about that he gave up the hardships of campaigning, and the fatigue of leading an army. As a result, his dominions and following diminished steadily, without having any increase, to the end.

In this long portraiture Babur goes on to describe all of Sultan Husain Baiqara's kin, his wives and children: 'The first wife he took...was the mother of Bad'iuzzaman, his eldest son. She was extremely cross in temper, and made the prince endure much wretchedness...At last, driven beyond endurance, he freed himself by divorcing her. What else could he do? He had had the right of it.

A bad wife in a good man's house
Turns his world into a hell. (Sa'di)

Babur continued his journey to Herat. In the autumn of 1506 he met the armed forces of Herat at the appointed place. Prince Jahangir had also submissively joined him and was pardoned for his rebellious conduct. Babur was surprised to see the encampment as if everyone was enjoying a gay festival instead of preparing themselves for the campaign.

Babur, escorted by his minister, Qasim Beg, approached the dais where the two brothers, the joint rulers of Khurasan were seated:

It had been agreed I was to bow first, whereupon the older prince would rise up and come to the edge of the stand for the greeting. I bowed and went forward at once to meet him. But the prince rose rather languidly and came on rather

slowly. Qasim Beg, who was concerned about my reputation as his own, gave my girdle a tug. I understood him, and went on more slowly, so the meeting was at the right spot.... Although this was hardly a social party, the servants brought in cooked meats with the drinks, and silver and gold cups. .

My forefathers had always observed the conventions and usages of Chengiz Khan strictly. In their courts, festivals, and while sitting down and rising up, they did nothing contrary to these rules. Now these rules certainly had no divine authority, so that a man had to obey them; still, they were good to follow by those who inherited them. Every man who has such good conventions ought to follow them. Although if a father has laid down some thing ill, his son ought to change it. (*Memoirs*)

Babur himself had never followed the rules of Chengiz Khan, but the law of Islam, the *Shari's*. After the death of Sultan Husain Baiqara, Babur considered himself to be the most senior leader of the Timurids. Once when Bad'iuzzaman, the elder son of Sultan Husain Baiqara, showed him scant respect, he reacted sharply. He sent two of his lords to his host, with this message: Babur might be young (he was twenty-three) but he had gained honours by twice fighting for Samarqand and winning back the throne of their ancestors. He had fought for their family against an alien foe. After that Bad'iuzzaman showed him courtesy and respect.

In the entertainment parties, Babur drank no wine. When it became known to Bad'iuzzaman that he did not drink, he did not press him. With the wine all sorts of eatables were offered, *kababs* of fowl and goose with dishes to match. At his age, Babur felt a fascination for music and dancing. For the first time he heard the melodies unheard by him before. Then he wondered at the energy and passion generated by strong drinks, and considered tasting the forbidden wine at a party held in his honour by the young prince Muzaffar Mirza. For three months, the lords of Herat had been arranging excellent banquets and wine parties but they did nothing about arranging an expedition and saving Herat from the clutches of Shaibani Khan. They had become strangers to war and its strategy

to hardships. While they were busy feasting, the frontier city surrendered to Shaibani Khan. Uzbek raiders approached the Murghab, within forty miles of Herat. Babur asked them to proceed against them to stop their advance, but the ruling lords refused, probably because they were jealous of Babur gaining new renown in the battle. As Shaibani Khan wanted to avoid a winter campaign he proceeded to Samarqand. When the Mirzas heard this they came to Herat and broke the camp. The two brothers, the joint rulers of Herat, urged Babur to stay on for the winter. He found it difficult to refuse the request of these rulers when they begged him in person to stay on. Besides, he liked Herat which had developed into a great centre of culture and material prosperity under the rule of Sultan Husain Baiqara. It was the converging point of all the great highways from East and West. It differed from other cities re-built after Timur's wars. It became the centre of Timurid renaissance, an abode of Humanities. Its monuments and gardens were simply magnificent, reminding Babur of Samarqand, his beloved city. The artists of the Herat school stylized the background but portrayed quite natural figures as proponents. Bihzad's school borrowed from the Chinese art, giving it a colour of Islamic civilization. The historian Khwandamir, disciple and grandson of the great Mirkhwand, was still living. He wrote his famous history *Habib-us-Siyar* under the patronage of Mir 'Ali Shir Nawai, Minister of Sultan mir's first work *Khulasatul Akhbar* (Quintessence of Histories) was an abridgement of *Rawzatus Safa* of Mirkhwand. Khwan-Husain Baiqara, and a famous Turki poet himself. Khwandadamir completed *Habib-us-Siyar* under the patronage of Shah Isma'il, founder of the Safavi dynasty of Iran.

Despite great luxury and comfort and intellectual and artistic activities of Herat, Babur decided not to stay on any longer there. He was much impressed by the marvellous gardens, the marble palaces, the mosques, the mausoleums, the colleges and the bazaars of Herat. However, Babur could not stay there any longer as he had received disquieting news from Kabul and, moreover, there was no question of an immediate campaign against Shaibani during the winter months. He, therefore, started for Kabul in the last week of December when snow had

begun to fall. The farther he went the deeper lay the snow. The cold was so intense that Babur confesses he had seldom experienced the like of it in the whole course of his life.

Babur had heard at Herat what had taken place in Kabul. During his absence, Shah Begum, the widow of Mahmud Khan, had conspired with the *begs* to raise her grandson, Khan Mirza, to the throne of Kabul. Shah Begum was a woman of spirit. Through intrigues she won over a body of Mongol soldiery, who had remained behind at Kabul, and who regarded the widow of their old Khan with reverence. She had also won over to her interest Sultan Sanjar Barlas, a chief of considerable influence, and her own sister's son.

Muhammad Husain Dughlat, father of Mirza Haider Dughlat, (author of *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* who later on gained eminence and favour of Babur), was also involved in the conspiracy. Before leaving for Herat, Babur had asked him to look after the administration in his absence, but he excused himself on some pretext or the other. During his absence he joined Shah Begum's clique—a fact slurred over by his son in *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* in order to exculpate his father as far as possible. But there can be no question that Muhammad Husain Dughlat was guilty of a serious act of treachery towards Babur, by giving his countenance to the schemes of Shah Begum. Babur in his *Memoirs* seems to have regarded Muhammad Husain Mirza as one of the chief movers in the plot, and evidently felt his ingratitude acutely, though with characteristic generosity he paradoned him. As he was in a way related to him, having sons and daughters by Babur's mother's sister, Khub Nigar Khanum, he took that connection into consideration and allowed him to set out for Khurasan. Entirely forgetful of Babur's generosity, the Mirza abused and libelled Babur's conduct to Shaibani Khan without any compunction. It was but a short time, however, before Shaibani Khan put him to death and thus avenged Babur. Later on his son, Mirza Haider Dughlat, rose in Babur's favour and was entrusted with important assignments.

The worst of it was that the rebellion at Kabul was organized by Babur's own relatives who had come to him as helpless refugees after the conquests of Shaibani Khan and the subsequent disaster at Samarqand and Tashkent. After

his return from Herat, Babur with his usual impetuosity, threw the rebels off balance. Mirza Khan took alarm and fled and his followers were beaten up. Babur, however, spared the lives of the arch-intriguer Sultan Sanjar Barlas and others. He sent his soldiers to protect Shah Begum and Princess Mihr Nigar Khanum who had taken shelter in tents by the Paradise Garden. Babur's characteristic magnanimity is evident from every word of the description of the incident in his *Memoirs*:

> Shah begum and the princesses were seated together in one tent. I dismounted at the usual distance and approached them with my accustomed deference and began to talk with them. They were much disturbed and ashamed. They neither made a reasonable excuse nor made the customary inquiries of affection about my health.

Mirza Khan was overtaken in the foothills and brought back in such a state of mind that he stumbled twice while coming over to Babur. Babur pardoned him for his rebellious conduct, although he felt the treachery of his kinsmen deeply. At this period the surrounding countries were in a state of anarchy and most of the men in his newly acquired territory were unsettled. Babur resorted to the expedient of making the leading men of his kingdom sign a bond of allegiance and fidelity. The recent revolt against him had justified the measure. Babur declared himself to be the Padshah (the Emperor) which even Timur, in spite of being the ruler of a vast empire, had not done.

Meanwhile, after spending the winter in Samarqand, Shaibani Khan proceeded towards Herat. The rulers of Herat had prepared no plan of operations and were still busy in internal discord and intrigue. Shaibani found no preparations to resist him. He took possession of the city of Herat. In two weeks the fort surrendered along with the whole *harem* of the late sovereign, the families and children and all the treasures of the Mirzas themselves. The citizens of Herat were plundered without mercy under Shaibani's orders. The victorious Uzbeks marched from every direction to Khurasan which soon lay prostrate before them. Bad'iuzzaman fled to Shah Ismai'l of

Persia, and after various adventures died at Constantinople about ten years later. Other Mirzas were put to death when prisoners in the course of the next two years. Mirza Haider Dughlat, author of the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, escaped to Badakhshan along with his tutor, Maulana Muhammad Sadr, and thence to Kabul after his father Sultan Muhammad Dughlat was well received by Babur who made suitable arrangements for his education. Mirza Haider Dughlat admits that through the unremitting attention of the Padshah, he never felt the loss of his father. Babur never separated him from himself except when Mirza Haider Dughlat was at his lessons. The Padshah regarded him with parental affection.

After the total discomfiture of the sons of Sultan Husain Baiqara in Khurasan, the troops of Shaibani Khan in their wantonness of success plundered some outposts of Shah Isma'il Safavi's frontier, and ravaged the province of Kirman. Moreover, Shaibani's booty-seeking marauders were conducting incessant frontier raids. Shah Isma'il wrote a polite letter to Shaibani Khan, drawing his attention to the raids of his followers, and sent it through an envoy. In reply, Shaibani returned a beggar's staff and a bowl, implying thereby that the Shah should return to his ancestral profession, instead of pretending to be a ruler. Shah Isma'il's father and his forbears were *dervishes* but they had intermarried with the royal house of the Turkomans of the White Sheep. His mother was the daughter and his grandmother the sister, of the celebrated Uzan Hasan, a prince whose sway extended over all Persia. Shah Isma'il was the first in the family to have attained the great temporal power. Shaibani Khan's advice to him, conveyed through the latter's envoy, was to perform the pilgrimage to Mekka. Shah Isma'il received Shaibani's taunt with affected humility. In return for his present, he sent him a spinning wheel and spindle, with a warning to take shelter among women if he would avoid the feel of sharp steel of swords. After this Shah Isma'il marched eastward and encountered Shaibani's army at Merv in 1510. In the battle Shah Isma'il feigned retreat and successfully enticed Shaibani and his troops to come out of the centre of Merv. The Persians put the Uzbeks to rout. Shaibani Khan and all his chief officers

were killed. His army dispersed in different directions. Such was the fate of Shaibani Khan who had brought so many calamities on Babur; who had stripped him of his paternal kingdom, and sent him out in exile into foreign lands. All the Uzbeks, on whom the Qizilbashes (red hats) could lay their hands, were slain. The battle of Merv thus shattered Shaibani Khan's dream of imperial domination of the like of Chengiz Khan and Timur.

Babur's cousin, Mirza Khan, who was in Badakhshan received a detailed report about the debacle of the Uzbeks at Merv, which he passed on immediately to Babur at Kabul in a letter sent through a messenger, advising him to proceed forthwith towards the north. 'If you will quickly turn the reins of your power in the direction of Qunduz, I will attach myself to you, and I have the firmest hope that you may soon recover your hereditary kingdom.'[1] As soon as Babur had read the contents of this letter, he set out with all possible haste, although it happened to be the middle of winter. On reaching Qunduz, he found that an ambassador had arrived from Shah Isma'il, bearing offers of friendship. Shaibani Khan had a son named Khurram Shah Sultan from Babur's sister, Khanzadeh Begum. Out of fear that she might, in concert with her brother, Babur, plot against his life, Shaibani Khan had divorced her and given her to one of his chiefs, Sayyid Hadi, an eminent Sayyid who was held in the greatest respect and honour by all the Uzbeks. Sayyid Hadi was killed in the battle of Merv, and the Begum and her son fell into the hands of the Qizilbashes. When Shah Isma'il came to know that she was Babur Padshah's sister, he treated her with great attention and respect, and sent her back with an ambassador bearing costly gifts to Babur. When Khanzadeh Begum arrived, Babur was overjoyed and despatched Mirza Khan to Shah Isma'il, laden with presents and charged with protestations of good faith and entreaties for support and assistance. Shah Isma'il received the envoy well, and having acceded to his request, gave him leave to return. In the interval, Babur received the news through a messenger that Farghana had

[1] Mirza Muhammad Haider Dughlat, *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, pp.237-38. Eng. tr. by N. Elias and Denison. Ross.

been cleared of the Uzbeks and that Shah Isma'il had brought that country under his control, so that the conquest of Mawarannahr would now become an easy matter.[1] The political situation was such that Babur once more started dreaming of winning back Samarqand. For this he requested Shah Isma'il to send him help. Babur's ambassador, Khan Mirza, accepted service under the Shah and was given the government of Hissar, Shadman and Badakhshan. The Shah sent a Persian contingent to Babur at Hissar. From here, Babur at the head of sixty thousand troops, marched to Bukhara and thence to Samarqand where he received a splendid reception from all the inhabitants of the city. The high and the low, the nobles and the poor, the grandees and the artisans alike showed their overwhelming joy and satisfaction at the advent of the Padshah. He was received by the nobles, while the others were busy with the decoration of the city. The streets and bazaars were draped with cloth and gold brocade, and drawings and pictures were hung up on every side. Babur entered Samarqand in October 1511, in the midst of pomp and splendour such as no one ever saw or heard of before or since. But the hopes of the people of Samarqand were not realized. For, as yet, Babur did not feel able to dispense with the aid and support of Shah Isma'il and his Qizilbash soldiery.[2] Very soon, there was disillusionment. This time, Babur had entered Samarqand with the help of the Qizilbashes (red hats) who were hated by the Turks on account of their atrocities in Herat and elsewhere. The Turks did not like that Babur should undertake to strike coins and read the *Khutba* in the name of Shah Isma'il. In the beginning, the people of Samarqand had greeted Babur, but when they learnt that he had proclaimed himself to be a vassal of the Shah, they withdrew their allegiance from him. The presence of the Qizilbashes was anathema to the folk of Samarqand who remembered the rule of Shaibani Khan and his Uzbeks with nostalgia. The melting of the snow in 1512 brought 'Ubaidullah Khan, nephew of Shaibani Khan, and his Uzbek troops down from the north towards Samarqand. Babur

[1] *Ibid*, p.239.
[2] *Ibid*, p.246.

went out to meet them. He could raise no levy from Samarqand as the people had become antagonistic to him on account of his Persian allies. Most probably 'Ubaidullah Khan and his Uzbek troops knew that Babur did not have enough strength to meet him on the field. The Uzbeks advanced in great strength and defeated Babur at the battle of Kul-i-Malik in May 1512. Babur escaped to the south to hold the fortress of Hissar. With him travelled his family. Again he sent an appeal to the Shah of Iran for help. The Shah sent eleven thousand men under the command of Najm Sani to reinforce the discomfited Babur. Najm Sani was a headstrong man of overweering arrogance. Against the opinion of Babur, he advanced to besiege the fortress of Karshi where some members of the family of 'Ubaidullah Khan had taken shelter. On the order of Najm Sani the fortress was stormed, the warriors and the inhabitants were put to the sword without any distinction. When Babur expressed his displeasure at the atrocities committed by the Qizilbashes on innocent inhabitants, Najm Sani became critical and suspicious of Babur's behaviour. But militarily, Najm Sani's decisions prevailed. He advanced from Bukhara and encountered the Uzbeks under the command of Jani Beg and 'Ubaidullah Khan at Ghujduwan. Najm Sani had by his haughtiness and harsh treatment alienated even some Persian officers who deserted him at the time of the battle along with their followers. Babur also withdrew and went towards Hissar. Najm Sani was captured by the Uzbeks and beheaded and a large part of the Persian army was annihilated. The Persians laid the responsibility of their defeat at the hands of the Uzbeks, on Babur's shoulders. Thirty years later when Humayun asked for military help from Shah Tahmasp, Babur's 'treachery' at Ghujduwan was recalled by some courtiers who were against the interests of Humayun, but it was overlooked by the Shah and the imperial family. However, the pro-Safavid contemporary authorities ascribe the causes of defeat at Ghujduwan to Najm Sani's folly and overbearing temperament. He treated Babur, who had assumed the title of Padshah, as if he was his subordinate whose existence depended on the help offered to him by the Qizilbashes under his command. Najm Sani was tactless in dealing with his own

officers whom he had completely alienated and who left him in the midst of the battle. Babur, disgusted with Najm Sani's arrogance, left for Hissar and from there for Kabul with his family. He left Mirza Khan undisturbed in possession of Badakhshan and withdrew to the lower Amu river.

By now Babur had realized that it was futile to try to hold any portion of the Timurid empire. After having occupied Samarqand three times he now turned his back on its palaces and gardens. Although even now they had not lost their influence over his imagination and affection. When Babur returned to Kabul, he was received with every mark of honour by his youngest brother, Nasir Mirza, to whom he had assigned that kingdom when he conquered Samarqand.[1] Like his other step-brother Jahangir Mirza, a few years earlier, Nasir Mirza also fell a victim to excesses in his indulgence of wine.

In Kabul, Babur's position depended on his ability to satisfy the needs and desires of his followers, and the resources of the country of Kabul itself were not sufficient for this purpose. He had complete control over his kingdom of Kabul and had annexed Qandahar, driving away Shah Beg Arghun to Sind. Having put his house in order in the Afghan country, Babur felt that to augment his material resources he had to turn towards India to meet the expenses of his growing army. With this objective in view, he overawed and in some cases reconciled the tribal people living in the belt between the mountainous country and the Indus. From his stay in Transoxiana Babur had brought a new knowledge of the use of gunpowder. He knew that the victory of the Osmanli Turks against Shah Isma'il in 1514 in the battle of Khaldiran was solely due to the effective use of artillery by the Turks. He secured, therefore, the services of Ustad 'Ali and Mustafa, the artilleryists from Turkey. Babur's alert mind sensed that the day of the mounted lancer might be ending, and the day of entrenched infantrymen beginning. He used firearms for the first time in the siege of Bajaur in 1519. 'As the Bajauris had never

[1] Erskine, *History of India* (Under the two first Sovereigns), vol. I, p 334.

beheld matchlocks before, they did not fear them having the ramparts, but posed in front of them with indecent gestures. That day Master 'Ali Quli shot and brought down five men with his matchlock. Other matchlockmen did equally effectively, shooting through shields and leather screens and even mail coats. By the evening eight or ten Bajauries had been killed, and after that these people feared to show their heads on the ramparts. When darkness fell, Babur ordered that proper engines be made ready to break into the fort.

> At the first dawn on Friday, the kettledrums were sounded for battle. The troops all marched forward to their stations, with mantlets and ladders.....Master 'Ali Quli did well again that day, and fired off the European cannon twice....Muhammad Ali Dingdong and his young brother each got up on different ladders and struck their swords, when going against lances.
>
> By breakfast time Dost Beg's men had undermined and broken into the northern tower, got in themselves, and driven off the enemy. By the favour of God this strong and mighty fort was taken in two or three astronomical hours. .... I took my quarters in the residence of the Bajaur Sultan. The country I gave over to Khwaja Kalan. (*Memoirs*)

The Bajauris had never had the experience of fighting disciplined soldiers with firearms. Babur, after his return from Samarqand, had trained his soldiers in accordance with European methods of warfare. Master 'Ali Quli was also a Turkish officer who has been especially mentioned by Babur in connexion with the siege of Bajaur, for firing off the European (*farangi*) cannon twice. Babur had managed to obtain European firearms from Turkey, both matchlock and cannons. The Osmanli Turks had been familiar with artillery which were cast by their military engineers. The matchlock shoulder pieces were in general use in the Turkish army for the last three generations. A great change in Babur's military policy had taken place recently in that he no longer depended on the Mongol troops who had proved treacherous and unreliable so many times in the past, but on the Afghans who he freely

recruited for his army. After the conquest of Bajaur, his policy of reconciliation towards the Afridis and the Yusufzais had opened new avenues to increase his forces and recruit and train the Afghan tribesmen for his military objectives beyond the Indus. As a friendly gesture towards the Afghans, Babur married Bibi Mubaraka,[1] daughter of Shah Mansur, the Yusufzai Malik. She bore Babur no children but was most popular among the royal women on account of her merry disposition and her cordiality towards all the ladies she came in contact with. By his marriage with Bibi Mubaraka, Babur became son-in-law of all the tribesmen who paid him tribute and served in his army. He thus acquired social legitimacy for his rule over the Afghan tribesmen. By conciliating the tribal belt Babur cleared his way to India. The tribal Afghans, being the largest component of his army, virtually conquered the whole of northern India for him, from Peshawar to Patna.

While on his way to Kabul, Babur reached Istalif and liked its surroundings. He had a keen perception of the essential elements of a climate, a region and its topography.[2] He notes in his *Memoirs*: 'A one mill stream having trees on both banks, flows constantly through the middle of the garden. Its course was zig-zag and irregular. I had it made straight and orderly—so the place became very beautiful....I ordered that the spring should be enclosed in mortared stone-work 10 × 10, and that a symmetrical rightangled platform should be built on each of its sides, so as to overlook the whole field of the *arghawan* (juda trees).'

A.S. Beveridge in her translation of *Memoirs* gives a list of ten gardens planted by Babur at Kabul.[3] In the Avenue Garden (Bagh-i-Babur) there was shortage of water and a canal of the volume of one mill stream had to be diverted. Babur writes: 'I had water brought from Tutumdara to rising ground south-west of Khwaja Basta, there made a reservior and

[1] Later known as Haji Begum and Bega Begum (Gulbadan Begum, *Humayun Namah*, p.218.

[2] C. M. Villiers Stuart, *Gardens of the Great Mughals*, p.94. London, 1843.

[3] Appendix. V, pl. XXIX. Her information is based on *Badshah Namah* of Qazvini.

planted young trees. The place got the name of Belvedere, because it faces the fort and gives a first rate view. The best young trees must be planted there, lawns arranged and borders set with sweet herbs and with flowers of beautiful colour and scent.' Bagh-i-Babur is the garden where the Emperor had wished to be buried. The description of this garden given in the *Badshah Namah* is as follows:

> The burial garden (Bagh-i-Babur) was 500 yards (gaz) long; its ground was in 15 terraces, 30 yards apart. On the 15th terrace is the tomb of Ruquiya Sultan Begum (she was a daughter of Hindal, a grand-daughter of Babur, and Akbar's first wife who brought up Shahjahan). Babur's tomb is on the 14th terrace. In accordance with his will, no building was erected over it; but Shahjahan built a small marble mosque on the terrace below. It was begun in the 17th year of Shahjahan's reign and was finished in the 19th after the conquest of Balkh and Badakhshan at a cost of 30,000 rupees. From the 12th terrace running water flows along the line of the Avenue; but its 12th waterfalls, because not constructed in cemented stones, had crumbled away and their charm was lost; orders were given therefore to renew them lastingly; to make a small reservoir below each fall and to finish with Kabul marble the edges of the channels and the waterfalls and the borders of the reservoirs. And on the 9th terrace there was to be a reservior 11 × 11 yards (9.90 × 9.90 m), bordered with Kabul marble, and on the 10th terrace one 15 × 15 yards (13.50 × 13.50) also with marble borders, and at the entrance another 15 × 15 yards. And there was to be a Gateway adorned with guilded cupolas befitting that place, and beyond the Gateway, a square station one side of which should be the garden wall, and the three filled with cells; that running water should pass through the middle of it, so that the destitute and poor people, who might gather there should cut this pond in these cells sheltered from the hardships of snow and rain.[1]

[1] Muhammad Amin Qazvini, *Badshah Namah*, Biblio-India, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.

Beveridge's comment is that in accordance with his will no building was erected over the grave, but Shahjahan built a small marble mosque near the grave. The tomb is open to the sky and lies in one of the most beautiful and magnificently sited garden which lies on the slope of the hill Shah-i-Kabul, looking towards an unsurpassable view over the Char-deh plain towards the snows of Paghmann and the barren rocky hills which have been the hunting grounds of the rulers in Kabul.[1]

There is difference of opinion about the site of the Bagh-i-Wafa or Garden of Fidelity mentioned in the *Memoirs*. He had laid it out in 1508-9 A.D. It seems that it was one of his favourite gardens because there are in the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, several miniatures showing Babur giving instructions for the planning of this garden. The miniatures date from the times of Akbar. Some writers have made a geographical mistake locating the Bagh-i-Wafa on the Kabul river near Kabul and not on the Surkhrud, one of its affluents much closer to Jalalabad, approximately in the area where Nimla lies.[2]

The Bagh-i-Wafa, as pointed out by Maria Teresa Shephard Parpagliolo, was situated on the road to the Khyber Pass, south of the Kabul river into which the Surkhrud flows in the vicinity of Jalalabad, at about 50 miles from Kabul, an attractive halting place on the march to India.[3] It was here that Babur, waiting to be joined by the army led by Humayun before the conquest of India, rested for a few days. Babur notes: 'Those were the days of the garden's beauty; its lawns were one sheet of trefoil; its pomegranate trees yellowed to autumn splendour, their fruit full red; fruit on the orange trees green and glad...the pomegranates were excellent...the one excellent and blessed content we have had from the Bagh-i-Wafa was had at this time. We were there three or four days; during the time the whole camp had pomegranates

[1] *Babur Namah*, II, 710.

[2] Maria Teresa Shephard Parpagliolo. *Kabul: The Bagh-i-Babur*, footnote p.7.

[3] *Ibid*, p.8.

in abundance.' The Bagh-i-Wafa comprising four gardens was conceived and planned after the conquest of Bajaur by way of reconciling the tribesmen to his suzerainty, just as his marriage with Bibi Mubaraka, daugther of Shah Mansur, the Yusufzai Malik was a gesture of goodwill.

As a garden-lover Babur prides himself on having brought the*Alu-balu*, the wild cherry of the Transoxiana into Afghanistan. On reaching Jalalabad he says: 'I all at once saw a new world: the vegetables, the plants, the trees, the wild animals all were different. The birds were of different plumage, and even the manners and customs of the tribes were of a different kind.' (*Memoirs*)

Babur had a feeling, a quick appreciation of the potential possibilities of a site. He observes about his laying out of the Bagh-i-Wafa:

> I laid out the four gardens known as the Bagh-i-Wafa on rising ground, facing south and having the Surkhrud between it and fort Admapur. There oranges and pomegranates grew in abundance. The year I defeated Papar and took Lahore and Dipalpur, I had plantains (bananas) brought and planted there; they did very well. The year before I had sugar-canes planted there; they also did very well. The garden lies high, has running water close at hand, and a mild winter climate. In the middle of it a one mill stream flows the little yards round which are orange trees and a few pomegranates, the whole encircled by a trefoil meadow. This is the best part of the garden, a most beautiful sight when the oranges take colour. Truly that garden is admirably situated.' (*Memoirs*)

Like 'Ali Shir Navai, minister and friend of Sultan Muhammad Baiqara of Herat, Babur wrote poetry in Turki and Persian. He wrote in praise of Kabul:

Drink wine in the land of Kabul, and send round the cup without hesitation;
For it is at once a mountain and a sea, a town and a desert!

In one of his Persian poems he says:

Sweet is the coming of the new year,
And sweet the fair face of spring.
Yet sweet is the juice of the fragrant grape,
More sweet the whisper of love,
Ah, Babur, grasp at life's pleasures,
Which, when departed, can never be summoned back.

Versification and calligraphy were considered a mark of culture among the Timurids. Babur wrote a long poem, called *Mubain,* as a testament of his four sons, Humayun, Kamran, Askari and Hindal. In this poem he has given practical advice to his sons about the welfare of the subjects. One part of the poem has been translated into Russian.[1] Babur wanted to introduce a new system of revenue in Kabul, totally different from what was current in Samarqand and Herat. The country of the Afghans was poor with its arid lands, crags and passes, in which the feudal practice of land-owning lords paying a tax drawn from share-croppers on their fields, was not practicable. It had to be given up for a more direct tax on land, herds, and trade. In the system introduced by Babur, land revenue was fixed according to the area, without regard to yield, which had the effect of inducing owners to increase their harvests. Fruit orchards paid a little, a tenth of the yearly yield. Herds of sheep or goats were taxed, one ram on a hundred animals; cattle contributed one in thirty, horses one in forty; while five camels for some reason yielded one sheep. Herd-owners were free to make a choice whether they would like to pay in money or kind. As regards trade, local merchants had to pay a certain duty, on incoming caravan merchants.[2]

The taxes were paid mostly in kind, and chiefly from animal herds and the shops of the bazaar. Babur wanted to make Kabul a garden city like Samarqand. He planted orchards and gardens and improved the irrigation in some parts of the country, to the benefit of the people. After twenty years' rule

[1] Quoted by Harold Lamb in *Babur the Tiger,* p.141.
[2] *Ibid.*

Babur had come to like Kabul and its gardens. He called the Afghan country and its people his own. 'Our eyes', he writes, 'are on this land and people.' He liked the land and the people, but he required more land to give to his nobles as fiefs for which he had to turn towards Hindustan.

II

THE EMERGENCE OF THE EMPIRE

ACCORDING to Babur himself he intended to extend his conquests to Hindustan after consolidating his position in Kabul:

> From the time when I conquered the land of Kabul, I always had the purpose of subduing Hindustan. However, I was prevented at times by the troubles with my nobles, at times by their intrigues with my brothers, and always by their dislike of the plan. At last all these obstacles were out of my way. There was no one, high or low, wise or stupid, who ventured to argue against the enterprise....After taking the fort of Bajaur by storm (in 1519) I had devoted myself particularly to the affairs of Hindustan.

Babur had a claim to northern India because of the conquest by his great ancestor, Timur. The very fact that he named one of his sons Hindal (of Hind) shows that Hindustan was very much on his mind. Babur's plan to invade India after the establishment of his rule in Kabul is later corroborated by Abul-Fazl in his *Akbar Namah*: 'By secret inspiration he (Babur) was led to lay aside marching to Transoxiana and to press forward to the conquest of Hindustan.'[1]

After consolidating his position in Kabul, Babur undertook five expeditions to India. In 1504, he marched along the

[1] Abul Fazl, *Akbar Namah,* Eng. tr. vol. I, p.234.

Peshawar-Attock road, passed through the Khyber, and then instead of crossing the Indus, proceeded to Kohat where he found much booty which he distributed among his soldiery. In September 1507 he again marched in the direction of Hindustan and came as far east as Adinapur (Jalalabad). In 1519, Babur after capturing the fort of Bajaur, advanced into Bhira where he issued strict orders to his soldiery preventing the marauding and plunder of the populace.

Babur was a keen observer of men and things. After crossing the Indus, which is the natural barrier between the Sulaiman-Hindukush massif and India, running fifty to a hundred miles east of the mountain passes, Babur noticed how the aspect of the land changed, the clear skies of Kabul altered to the rain clouds of Hindustan, the farming communities and domestic animal herds yielded to the city life and rain-fed agriculture and active trade of the plains. Even the fauna and flora were different. Beyond the Indus lay the fertile region of the Punjab fed by its four rivers and the upper Indus. This time he imposed a tax upon the inhabitants and divided the proceeds among his troops. Having crossed the Jhelum, Babur advanced to Sialkot. As the town submitted, it was spared from plunder. Sayyidpur offered resistance. The garrison was put to the sword and the inhabitants carried into captivity. From here Babur returned to Kabul. The interval between the third and the fourth expeditions was employed in the reduction of Qandahar and in bringing order to the internal economy of the country. In the meantime, events taking place in the Punjab made it more and more favourable for his attempt on India.

The civil wars, which had followed the succession of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi had thrown the whole of north India into acute disorder. The Sultan of Delhi had sent an army under Behen Khan Lodi to bring Daulat Khan Lodi of Lahore to book. Finding himself unable with his own resources to resist the force, he sought help from Babur, offering in return to acknowledge him as his sovereign. Daulat Khan sent his son Dilawar Khan, to invite Babur to dethrone Ibrahim Lodi in favour of his uncle 'Alauddin. Babur welcomed the invitation and marched in 1522 into the valleys of the Jhelum

and the Chenab. Lahore and Dipalpur soon into his hands, Here Babur was joined by Daulat Khan and his two sons, Ghazi Khan and Dilawar Khan. They were courteously received, but a misunderstanding soon arose between Babur and Daulat Khan. Instead of the important province of Lahore, Babur allotted to Daulat Khan only the districts of Jullundur and Sultanpur, lying between the rivers Beas and Sutlej, as his fief. Daulat Khan felt disappointed, and so the fiefs were bestowed on his more reliable son, Dilawar Khan. Dipalpur was given to 'Alauddin ('Alam Khan). Daulat Khan and his second son, Ghazi Khan fled to the hills, from where they returned after Babur had withdrawn to Kabul. They recaptured Sultanpur from Dilawar and Dipalpur from 'Alauddin. Ibrahim Lodi's attempt to subdue Daulat Khan had also proved unsuccessful. On account of this confused state of affairs in the Punjab, 'Alauddin fled to Kabul, seeking Babur's aid to put things straight in Hindustan and to be elevated to the throne of Delhi. In return, Babur was promised sovereignty over Lahore and west Punjab. After 'Alauddin's return to India, Daulat Khan won him over to his side, offering him military aid to gain the throne of Delhi. Daulat Khan presented to 'Alauddin a deed of accession and allegiance, acknowledging him as his sovereign. The deed was guaranteed and attested under the seals of the Qazis and leading nobles of the Punjab.[1]

Dilawar Khan was also now reconciled to them, and associated himself with the confederacy. Babur's Turkish officers, whom he had left at Lahore at the head of a detachment, failed to dissuade 'Alauddin to abstain from cooperating with Daulat Khan. Mahmud Khan Jahan Khan, an Afghan Chief, whom Babur had entrusted with the government of Lahore, was also pressed into Daulat Khan's service. It was finally arranged among them that Daulat Khan and Ghazi Khan should remain in the Punjab and have the government of that region and control of all the officers whom Babur had left behind at Lahore, while 'Alauddin attended by Dilawar Khan and Haji Khan, two sons of Daulat Khan, was to lead

[1] Erskine, *History of India*, vol.I, pp.424-5.

the army against Ibrahim Lodi. 'Alauddin and his confederates, numbering about forty thousand, were defeated by Ibrahim Lodi and their army dispersed. Some of their chief officers, among whom was Mahmud Khan Jahan Khan, had joined Sultan Ibrahim before the battle. 'Alauddin himself retreated in confusion towards the Punjab, attended by the two sons of Daulat Khan.

No sooner had Babur disengaged himself from the affairs of Balkh, which was cut off by the march of the Uzbeks, than he set out on his fifth and last expedition to India, leaving Kamran, then a child, in the nominal charge of Kabul and Qandahar, along with some of his trustworthy *begs*. He was joined on his march by Humayun with the forces from Badakhshan. He crossed the Indus in November 1525 at the head of 12,000 men, of whom only 10,000 were effectives. Daulat Khan's forces melted away at Babur's approach. On the promise of pardon, Daulat Khan surrendered the fortress he held and waited on Babur as a suppliant. He was allowed to retire with his family to the hills where his clansmen lived. Several officers were deputed to safeguard the treasures in the fortress. After this, Babur visited the library collected by Daulat Khan's son, Ghazi Khan, giving some of the books to Humayun and sending others to Kamran. This shows that even the pressure of events did not reduce his abiding interest in artistic and intellectual pursuits. In February 1526, Humayun won his spurs in an engagement against an advance division of the Indian army. Ibrahim Lodi was proceeding from Delhi towards Sirhind. From 12 to 19 April, 1526, the two armies faced each other near Panipat. There was dissension and treachery in Ibrahim's army, while Babur's army was united and purposeful. Babur writes:

> I put my foot in the stirrup of resolution, set my hand on the rein of my trust in God, and went forward against Sultan Ibrahim, son of Sultan Sikandar, the Lodi Afghan, whose throne at that time held the capital of Delhi, and the domination of Hindustan—whose standing army numbered one hundred thousand, whose elephants, with his *begs'* elephants were a thousand.

> Some of those in the army were anxious, and began to fear. Neither anxiety nor fear helps at all. Why? Because what God has ordained through eternity cannot be changed. Even so, it is not a reproach to men to be worried and afraid. Those men of mine were feeling the trial of waiting there, two or three months' journey from their homes. We were faced by a foreign people, speaking a tongue we did not know. People said among themselves that the army standing against us numbered a hundred thousand, with a thousand elephants. Ibrahim had in his hands the treasures of his father and grandfather. But he did not pay out this money to his followers in war. How could he content his warriors when he kept counting over his coins? Unlike an experienced leader, he did not provide material for battle. Nor could he decide whether to stand, move away or fight. (*Memoirs*)

At Panipat, Babur made ready for the battle that was to decide the fate of the whole country. To prevent the irruption of the enemy's cavalry, he connected the gun-carriages with twisted built hides, and between the apertures stood the cannons of the Turkish artillery men, better mantlets shielded the matchlockmen. Babur acknowledges that the enemies opposed to him were different from the Uzbeks with whom he had to contend in the north, and that Ibrahim Lodi was an inexperienced and impulsive young man, negligent in all his movements. His army marched without order, halted or retired without a plan, and engaged in battle without foresight. On the morning of 20 April, 1526, the pickets of Babur's army reported that the enemy was advancing in battle array. Babur's army prepared for action. He assigned commanders to each division. On the right and left of the whole line, he started strong flanking parties, who were to be ready when in need, to wheel round on the enemy and take them in the flank and rear by the formidable charge of *Tulughma,* the effect of which he had himself experienced in his wars with the Uzbeks. Babur's artillery spread consternation among the troops of Ibrahim Lodi and his army forged ahead. Owing to the unmanageable numbers of the Lodi army, it had to converge

suddenly. The whole front collapsed in confusion in the effort to re-adjust itself before Babur's narrow entrenched position. Babur, a master of tactics, had simultaneous recourse to *Tulughma* and artillery action. Babur's men surrounded the Indians on all sides and attacked, routed and slaughtered them. The mass of them began to melt and run away in flight towards Delhi. Entrenched infantry had prevailed over charging riders; disciplined tactics had won over individual courage. Ibrahim Lodi lay dead among the slain. Babur ordered his burial with ritual honour. He writes:

> When the threat of the battle began, the sun was spear-high in the sky. Until midday the fighting had been in full force. When noon passed, the enemy was crushed in defeat, and our allies were gay and rejoicing. By God's mercy and kindness this difficult undertaking was made easy for us. In half of one day that armed mass was scattered over the earth. Five or six thousand were killed close to Ibrahim. My estimate of the others dead upon the field was fifteen thousand to sixteen thousand, but later, in Agra, the Hindustanis stated that forty thousand may have died in that battle.
>
> As soon as the enemy was defeated, pursuit of the flying and unhorsing of the riders began. My men brought in lords of all ranks and chieftains they had captured. Mahouts came in to make offerings of herd after herd of elephants....That same day I called on prince Humayun to ride fast and light-burdened to Agra with Khwaja Kalan and Wali, the Treasurer, to get that city into their hands and mount a guard over its treasures. I appointed others to leave their baggage behind and go straight for Delhi to keep watch over the treasures there.
>
> Next day we marched on and dismounted after two miles, for the sake of the horses, on the bank of the Jamuna. There we halted for two days, and made the circuit around the tomb of Shaikh Auliya (Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya). That same evening we rode on to the fort of Delhi and spent the rest of the night there.

> The day after I made the circuit of Khwaia Qutbuddin's (Hazrat Bakhtiar Kaki's) tomb and visited...the tombs and gardens of Sultans Behlol and Sikandar. After that we dismounted at the camp and went on a boat where *arak* was drunk.
>
> I bestowed the military charge of Delhi on Red Wali... and sealed up the treasuries. Thursday we dismounted on the bank of the Jamuna over against Tughlaq City. Friday, while I remained in the river camp, Maulana Mahmud and Shaikh Zain went with a few others into Delhi for the congregational prayer. They read the *Khutba* in my name, gave out an allowance of money to the poor, and returned to camp.

Babur has thus casually mentioned the first proclamation of his name as Padshah of Kabul and Delhi. That Friday on 27 April, 1526 the reign of the first Mughal emperor in India began. In Delhi all the governmental palaces, treasuries and offices were sealed and occupied by Babur's men. Orders were issued against looting or annoyance of women. The population of Delhi were grateful to him for the consideration shown to them.

Babur enlisted large numbers of the defeated Pathans in his army which earned him their loyalty. After his victory at Panipat, his attitude towards the people of India was essentially conciliatory and humane. His treatment of Ibrahim Lodi's mother and dependents or that of Sher Shah may be cited as illustrative of his general fairness to the Hindustani Pathans. Thus convinced of Babur's policy with regard to the people of India, irrespective of their religion, the masses of people felt drawn closer to the new regime. Babur, on his part reciprocated their trust. When some of his followers decided to depart to their native land, he was unperturbed and gladly gave his permission, being sure of the loyalty and allegiance of the people of northern India.

Humayun, who had been sent forward to Agra, had blockaded the city in such a manner that nothing could be carried off from there. Vikramajit, the Rajah of Gwalior, had lately been compelled to surrender his principality to Ibrahim Lodi

whose suzerainty he had acknowledged. He, with his detachment of troops, was present at the battle of Panipat and had been slain. His wives and children, with some of his followers, who were now in the fort of Agra, were seized while attempting to escape. Humayun treated them with consideration and pardoned them. The *ranis* offered gifts to Humayun as a token of gratitude, including precious jewels: among these was the great diamond now identified as the *Koh-i-Noor*. This rose-tinted diamond weighed 320 *ratis*. On 10 May, 1556 Babur entered Agra and took up his residence in Sultan Ibrahim's palace. Here he received from Humayun, among other treasures, a diamond (*Koh-i-Noor*) which according to Babur valued at half the daily expenditure of the whole world. But the father, in generous recognition of his son's services, presented it to Humayun together with other gifts worth seventy lakh dams. A *parganah* was bestowed on Ibrahim's mother. *Parganahs* were also granted to each of her Amirs. She was conducted with all her effects to a palace, which was assigned for her residence about a *kos* below Agra. Babur's *begs* received six to ten lakhs in coin, apart from goods, horses and weapons. Each Amir and chieftain received a payment in exact proportion to his status. Every swordsman, gunner, driver and camp-maker got his share. Even traders and camp followers, including those who were absent, friends in Farghana, Khurasan, Kashghar, and Persia were bestowed gifts of gold and silver, cloth and jewels, and captive slaves. Holy men in Herat, Samarqand, Mecca and Medina got offerings, and every person in Kabul, man, woman, slave or free, young and old, received a silver coin as a memento of the victory. The balance was stored up in the vaults of the capital for the support of the army and administration. A rumour was current that Babur had given away the treasures he had captured much against the practice of former rulers of Medieval India who believed only in hoarding. Babur was known to be a *Qalandar* with hardly any interest in money and jewels. One of the first mosques built by him in India had an inscription: 'Babur the *Qalandar* is well known in the world as king.' He himself expressed this thought in a verse: 'Although I am not

of the fellowship of *dervishes,* yet, as king I am their follower in spirit.'[1]

Babur did not have time enough after the division of treasures to send proper persons to occupy and protect the different *parganahs* and stations. That year the heat was abnormal, and many of Babur's men dropped dead. Not a few of his *begs* and officers began to lose heart, objected to remaining in Hindustan, and even began preparations to return to Kabul. No sooner had Babur heard this murmuring among his troops, than he summoned all his *begs* to a council. He told them that by the grace of Almighty they had routed their formidable enemy and achieved the conquest of the numerous provinces. There was no compelling force and no hardship obliging them, without any visible cause, to abandon their conquest and to retreat to Kabul with every symptom of discomfiture: 'Let not anyone who calls himself my friend, ever henceforward make such a proposal. But if there is anyone among you who cannot bring himself to stay on or give up his purpose of returning back, let him depart.' Having heard this fair and reasonable proposal, the discontented were of necessity compelled, however unwillingly, to remain in India.

Babur Padshah was on free and intimate terms with Khwajah Kalan, one of his chief officers, who happened to be a very witty person. The climate of India did not suit him at all. Babur also wanted to send some highly-placed and responsible officers to look after the affairs of Kabul and Ghazni. He permitted Khwajah Kalan to go to Ghazni with presents for all his friends and others. Khwajah Kalan, before his departure for Ghazni, inscribed the following verse on a wall:

> If safe and sound I pass the river Sind,
> Shame on me if ever I again long for Hindustan.

Babur in reply composed a verse, which he sent by a messenger to Khwajah Kalan while on his way to Ghazni which reached him before he arrived at his destination:

> Babur, give hundred thanks to Almighty God,
> Who gave us Sind and Hind and royal kingdom,

[1] Harold Lamb, *Babur the Tiger,* pp.163-4.

If ever wearied by the fire of its skies,
You long for cold, remember the frost and snow of Ghazni.

When Khwajah Kalan conveyed the news of Babur's victory, the expectant people in Kabul held great festivities. Princess Gulbadan Begum, daughter of Babur Padshah, has given a vivid description from recollection in her *Humayun Namah*. She writes:

The treasures of five kings fell into his hands. He gave all of it away. The Amirs in Hind thought it was scandalous to give away such treasures of bygone kings. Khwajah Lord Kalan said His Majesty told him, 'You take the treasures to my elderly aunts and my sisters and each person of the *harem*. I shall write a list, and you will give out the presents according to the list. You will order a pavilion and screen wall to be set up in the garden of the Audience Hall for each princess, and when this joyful place of gathering together is prepared, they shall all make the prayer of thanksgiving for the victory.

To each princess shall be delivered one dancing girl, selected from Sultan Ibrahim's girls, and one gold plate filled with rubies, pearls, carnelians, diamonds and emeralds.... Two other trays of mother-of-pearl filled with coins...and varieties of dress stuffs counted off by nines.

Let them also divide and present silver coins and dress stuffs to my sisters and young children, and the *harems* of Kinsmen to other princesses, housekeepers, and nurses and foster brothers and their ladies—to all who pray there for me.

So the gifts were made, according to the list, while all of us remained together for three happy days in the garden of the Audience Hall. All were filled with pride, and recited the opening prayer of the *Quran* for blessings upon His Majesty, while gladly making the prostrations of thanks.

Now the Padshah sent also by the hand of Khwajah Kalan a single large *ashrafi* for Asau, the night guard (possibly a survivor of the night guards of the old palace of his father, 'Umar Shaikh at Andijan). It weighed all of three imperial *ser*. He said to the Khwajah, "If Asau asks you what has the Padshah sent for me, say you—One *ashrafi*, as if it were really

one ordinary coin." So the Khwajah did, and Asau was amazed, and fretted about it for three days. The Padshah had ordered a hole to be bored in the great coin, and that Asau should be blind-folded, and the weight of silver hung upon his neck, and then he was to be sent into the *harem*. Accordingly the hole was bored and the *ashrafi* hung around his neck.

He was helpless with surprise of its weight, and delighted over it, and said, "No one shall get my *ashrafi* from me." After that each of the princesses gave him ordinary coins, so that he had seventy or eighty of these as well.

Gifts were also sent to Kabul, Ghazni, Qandahar and Badakhshan. Even the peasants received silver coins for their families. The people of Samarqand received gifts to remind them of the Padshah. Pilgrims bore his presents to the holy sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina.

A message was sent that whosoever there may be of the blood of Timur and of Chengiz Khan let him come to the court to share the benefits of the new conquests. Babur had finally decided to live permanently in India, in spite of its hot climate, and therefore he wanted to summon all survivors of his blood, wherever they might be, to form the core of his new government in India.

Rana Sangram Singh of Mewar, popularly known as Rana Sanga, and Medini Rai of Chanderi, were two formidable Rajput rulers under whose leadership the Rajputs were determined to drive Babur away in cooperation with Sultan Mahmud Lodi, brother of Ibrahim Lodi and Hasan Khan Mewati. Babur looked upon his campaign against the Rajputs as a holy war, although there were Muslim troops also on the side of Rajputs. This was a political move on his part. It was necessary to arouse his dispirited and homesick soldiery. 'A general consternation and alarm prevailed among great and small. There was not a single person who uttered a manly word, nor an individual who delivered a manly opinion. The Wazirs, whose duty it was to give good counsel, and the Amirs who enjoyed the wealth of kingdoms neither spoke bravely, nor was their counsel or deportment such as became men of firmness. The forebodings of an astrologer whom Babur describes

as an 'evil-minded rascally fellow' made things appear more ominous and disheartened the soldiery. On this occasion, Babur assumed the title of Ghazi (warrior in the path of God) and renounced wine for ever. He directed the gold and silver goblets and cups with all the other utensils used for drinking parties, to be broken to pieces. The fragments of the goblets were distributed among the *dervishes* and the poor. Salt was thrown into the store of wine just received from Ghazni. All the wine found in the camp was poured on the ground, and surprisingly enough, as a symbol of his spiritual conversion, a well was ordered to be dug and an alms-house built on the spot to commemorate the event. To summon up the courage of his men he made a stirring appeal to them:

> Noblemen and soldiers! Every man that comes into the world is subject to dissolution....How much better is it to die with honour than to live with infamy....God Most High has been gracious in giving us this destiny, that if we fall we die martyrs, if we conquer we triumph in His Holy Cause. Let us swear with one accord that, by the Great Name of God, we will never turn back from such a death, or shrink from the stress of battle, till our souls are parted from our bodies.

Babur observes in his *Memoirs* that when he was in Kabul, Rana Sanga sent him an ambassador with profession of attachment, and had arranged with him that, if he would march from the vicinity of Delhi, he (Rana Sanga) would march from the other side upon Agra; yet when he defeated Ibrahim Lodi, and took Delhi and Agra, Rana Sanga did not make a single move. On the other hand, he claimed Kalpi, Dholpur and Bayana, all of which had been occupied by Babur. Rana Sanga having reduced Nizam Khan of Bayana to extremities, that chief sent a deputation to Babur, requesting his aid, for which he was prepared to pay him homage as Padshah. Babur did not hesitate to accept his allegiance, and sending a force to expel Rana Sanga, confirmed Nizam Khan in possession of Bayana with all its dependencies, in consideration for the payment of an annual tribute of twenty lakhs of rupees. Rana

Sanga had made preparations to oust Babur from his possessions and had mobilized the Rajput and other chieftains to offer effective resistance to him. The Rajput army numbered eighty thousand, while Babur's army numbered about ten thousand only.

The two armies of Babur and Rana Sanga met at Khanua, twenty miles from Agra, on 16 March, 1527. Babur again adopted the *araba* formation. He himself was in the centre, Chin Timur and Khanan and other Afghan nobles who had sworn allegiance to him were on the right wing; Sayyid Mehdi Khwajah was on the left; and on the right and left were the flanking parties; the artillery was commanded by Nizamuddin 'Ali Khalifa. Mustafa Rumi, the Turkish gunner, broke the enemies' ranks. The attacks of Rana Sanga's men were repulsed. The forces on the Rajput side outnumbered their antagonists by eight to one. When Babur led the centre forward, Rana Sanga's forces were demoralized and dispersed in different directions. The victory of Babur was complete. Rana Sanga escaped though badly wounded. Hasan Khan Mewati was among the slain. Sultan Mahmud Lodi took to flight. There was hardly a clan of the gallant Rajputs that did not lose the flower of its youth. Babur's victory at Khanua broke the power of the Rajputs. This was the most momentous victory in the career of Babur, more significant than even that at Panipat which had taken place eleven months earlier. The remnants of the Rajput army were gathered together and the lead was taken by Medini Rai, of Chanderi. Babur carried the fort of Chanderi by storm. This broke the back of Rajput resistance.

Babur then advanced towards Oudh, where the Afghans had organized resistance. He first stormed Shamsabad and drove the Afghan garrison out of Kannauj. At Babur's approach, the enemy crossed the river Ganges. Babur crossed the Ganges by building a temporary bridge of boats and put the insurgents to headlong flight, pursuing them as far as Lucknow where he defeated Bibban and drove him to Bengal. Subsequently Babur returned to Agra for the rainy reason, after which he set out towards Bihar where Mahmud Lodi, having fled from Khanua had gathered round himself 100,000 Afghans. Even Sher Khan (later Sher Shah), on whom Babur had bestowed tokens of

favour and had given him several *parganahs* and whom he left in command at Chunar, joined the enemy.

After settling the administration in the conquered areas by appointing fief-holders and by dividing the territory into a large number of *jagirs* which were distributed among his officers, Babur had now to deal with Mahmud Lodi who had captured power in Bihar. Many other Afghan chiefs of Oudh had also joined Mahmud Lodi in his plans to organize resistance against the Mughals in Bihar. Babur sent his son 'Askari in advance and himself followed him. Many Afghan chiefs, seeing that Babur had come to stay in India and did not, like Timur, intend to withdraw, laid down arms and made their submission to him. Babur defeated Mahmud Lodi and his associates in the battle of Ghagra in May 1529.[1] This was the third great battle which established Babur's sovereignty from Peshawar to Patna. His artillery as usual was irresistible. Now the whole of northern India was reduced to submission, Mahmud Lodi having taken shelter in Bengal.

Babur conquered a large portion of Bihar. He tried to occupy Kharid but having realized the strength of the ruler of Bengal, under whose dominion it was, changed his mind. Kharid finds mention in historic records of the Afghan rule and the Mughal period. It is referred to in Babur's *Memoirs* also that the jurisdiction of the ruler of Bengal extended over Kharid. It was finally annexed to the Mughal empire during the early years of Akbar's reign by 'Ali Quli Khan Zaman, Governor of Jaunpur, and formed a *Mahal* in the Sarkar of Jaunpur. Kharid's association with Bengal dates back to the reign of Nusrat Shah.[2]

After the victory of Ghagra, Babur sent his emissaries to Nusrat Shah, son of Husain Shah, ruler of Bengal and concluded a treaty of peace with him. Nusrat Shah recognized his suzerainty over parts of Bihar that had now been conquered by the Mughals. According to the treaty, each party agreed to respect the sovereignty of the other, and neither party was to support or shelter the other's enemies. After the battle of Panipat and Ghagra, some Afghan nobles of the old regime

[1] Shah Nawaz Khan, *Ma'athirul Umara*, vol.I, p.625, Calcutta, 1888.
[2] *Epigraphica Indica,* Arabic and Persian Supplement, 1911, p.47.

offered their allegiance to Babur. Among them were Dilawar Khan, Ara'ish Khan, Isma'il Jilwani, Malik Bibban Jilwani, Mahmud Khan Nuhani, and Shah Muhammad Farmuli, while there were others in the eastern districts who intended to continue resistance to the Mughal authority.

After his position was stabilized in India, Babur sent an exhortatory letter to his son Kamran Mirza at Qandahar:

> My dear, honoured and auspicious son, Mirza Kamran Bahadur. After sending you my love, I desire in the first place to express the peace of my soul and the delight of my heart at hearing that you yourself, your foster-brothers, your saddle-comrades, and your other intimates, have returned to your old studies.
>
> I record in this paper a hundred thanks to Almighty God for this favour. I trust that you will continue in your good way and that you will acquire abilities and graces and eventually attain to excellence. See that you fall not away from the good course, and that you bear in mind the words of his holiness Khwaja Hafiz. "Old men speak from experience. Yes I say unto you, my child, give ear to the instructions of the aged."
>
> I hear that those Chaghatays, who stayed in Herat after the death of Sultan Husain Mirza, became yet more allied with the people of Khurasan, and so became alienated from their old ways in Transoxiana. They developed much ability and acquired graces, (but) though the Khurasanis are a pleasant folk, and there can be no question about their cleverness, there is doubt about their religion, and their principles, and they are a nation of make-bates and agitators. The sons are alienated from the fathers, and the fathers from the sons. Do not be deceived by their plausible ways, and for your own safety's sake do not let them get out of hand.
>
> Among the Turkish tribes there is a house which observes the Gurgan customs (*tora gurgan*) and in which the fathers have been for generations the chiefs of actions, while the mothers have been the chiefs of domestic matters. They have served our family with life-long devotion. In heat and in cold, at home and abroad, they have not for a minute, or

the twinkling of an eye, swerved from their duty, and have always done good service. Study this family, preceding steadily along like a good roadster, and select from it, after examination, your chief minister (Vakil Mutlaq). Do not neglect this. As for young men, do not let yourself act according to their words and don't put any affairs into their hands. Act according to the opinions of thoughtful *Begs* who are of lofty mind, and who honestly express their opinions. Never neglect the sentiments of those who have been versed in business, and in deliberations, and discussions. Be not misled by flatterers and plausible people. Should they chance to say anything to the purpose, hear it, see it and ponder over it. It may, however, happen that what at first looks sound, turns out to be a quite old drum and so a thing to furnish sorrow to friends and laughter to foes. [Perhaps there is an allusion to the story of the Fox and the Drum, *Anwar-e-Suhaili*].

Discriminate between friends and foes. As the verse has it, "In the flowerbed, a flower, in the thornbrake, a thorn."

As regards the Qandahar army, it is a militia (*ihsham*). Do not accept a recruit on the recommendation of an ordinary person of no particular importance, but in case of necessity appoint anyone that you think fit. Observe the procedure of the leaders of assemblies, follow the rules and ceremonies of the Gurgans, be hearty and frank with your well-wishers and speak politely to people in general. Set out on an expedition after full preparation. Listen to everybody, and get acquainted with everybody whether they are far off or near at hand. As for insignificant and meanly-born people, do not educate them or employ them in state-affairs, even though they be well-dispositioned and possessed of ability. As his Excellency Shaikh Sa'di has said: 'A nobody does not become somebody by being educated. Tulips grow in gardens, weeds and thorns in saline soil.' Hazrat Maulana Jami's verse is well known: 'A really worthless person does not become efficient by change of circumstances. Transpose the words sag magas (dog fly) the heart (of the beast) still remains sag magas.

The people of Transoxiana are simple, but when they have brains they are worthy of trust and of office. By the incitement of that orb of the night, that candle of light and majesty, that eloquent nightingale of the flower garden—Hazrat Khwaja 'Ubaid Ullah, who has rendered help, through them (the people of Transoxiana) you have become a disciple and a companion, and been called the son of a Padshah. See that you do them due honour and that you make no shortcoming in this. (For) 'They who dwell within the portals of Love, love even the name of the Beloved.

As for the affairs of India, you will learn them from the Bulletin of Victory. The son of Ibrahim who was the king of India has fallen into our hands. I have sent (the Bulletin) to you, my dear son, in order that you may become acquainted with its contents. Hereafter whatever occurs will be reported to you. Goodbye' (Translated from Turki).[1]

The Mughal rule in India was now firmly established. Babur sent his officers in various directions to subjugate the rest of northern India. These officers fought with great zeal because they were promised the conquered territories as their *jagirs*. Humayun conquered Sambhal, Jaunpur, Ghazipur and Kalpi. Muhammad 'Ali Jang captured Rabiri; Mehdi Khwajah, brother-in-law of Babur, subjugated Etawah and its neighbourhood; Kannauj was subdued by Sultan Muhammad Duldari, and Dholpur by Sultan Junaid Barlas. Many Afghan chiefs were won over by promise of protection. Shaikh Bayazid, an important officer of Ibrahim Lodi, was granted a *jagir* worth a crore of rupees in Oudh. Bayana and Gwalior sumbitted to Babur for fear of the Rajputs. When Babur felt that his position in Hindustan had become strong enough, he sent Humayun to Badakhshan and other officers elsewhere outside India. Qandahar was in Kamran's charge. As seen above Khwajah Kalan, whom the Indian climate did not suit at all, had already been sent to Ghazni after the battle of Panipat. In February 1529, Babur wrote to Khwajah Kalan that the affairs of Hindustan had at last been brought to some degree of order.

[1] Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, New Series, vol.XV, 1919, Calcutta.

and he trusted in the Almighty God that the time was near at hand when, through His favour, everything will be quite settled in Hindustan. After this he allowed leave to everyone who wanted to go to Kabul or Khurasan as the case may be, because after his conquests he had consolidated his position politically and administratively. He trusted fully his chief minister, Khwajah 'Ali Khalifa, to discharge his responsibility efficiently and well. In fact, he left the whole administration in his hands without going into details himself. Babur decided to make India his home, although he complained about its climate and low standard of civilization. He had before him the high standard of culture of Samarqand and Herat which were the most advanced and sophisticated in the whole of Asia of that period. His impression about India cannot be better described than in his own words in the *Memoirs*:

> Hindustan is a country of few charms. Its people have no good looks; of social intercourse, paying and receiving visits there is none; of genius and capacity, none; of manners, none; in handicraft and work there is no form or symmetry, method or quality; there are no good horses, no good dogs, no grapes, musk-melons or first-rate fruits, no ice or cold water, no good bread or cooked food in the bazaars, no hot-baths, no colleges, no candles, torches, or candlesticks.
>
> In place of candle and torch they have a great dirty gang they call lamp-men (*diwati*), who in the left hand hold a smallish wooden tripod, to one corner of which a thing like the top of a candlestick is fixed, having a wick in it about as thick as the thumb. In the right hand they hold a gourd, through a narrow slit made in which oil is let trickle in a thin thread when the wick needs it. Great people keep a hundred or two of these lamp-men. This is the Hindustani substitute for lamps and candlesticks! If their rulers and *begs* have work of night reading candles, these dirty lamp-men bring these lamps, go close up and there stand.
>
> Except their large rivers and their standing waters which flow in their gardens or residences, these residences have no charms, air, regularity or symmetry. Peasants and people of low standing go about naked. They tie on a thing called

languta, a decency-clout which hangs two spans below the navel. From the tie of this pendant decency-clout, another clout is passed between the thighs and made fast behind. Women also tie on a cloth (long), one half of which goes round the waist, the other is thrown over the head.

Pleasant things of Hindustan are that it is a large country and has masses of gold and silver. Its air in the rains is very fine. Sometimes it rains 10, 15, or 20 times a day; torrents pour down all at once and rivers flow where no water had been. While it rains and through the rains, the air is remarkably fine, not to be surpassed for healthiness and charm. The fault is that the air becomes very soft and damp. A bow of those (Transoxanian) countries after going through the rains in Hindustan may not be drawn even, it is ruined; not only the bow, everything is affected, armour, book, cloth, and utensils all; a house even does not last long. Not only in the rains, but also in the cold and the hot seasons, the air is excellent at these times, however, the north-west wind constantly gets up laden with dust and earth. It gets up in great strength every year in the heats, under the Bull and Twins, when the rains are near, so strong and carrying so much dust and earth that there is no seeing one another. People call this wind Darkener of the Sky (*andhi*). The weather is hot under the Bull and Twins, but not intolerably so, not so hot as in Balkh and Qandahar and not for half so long.

Another great thing in Hindustan is that it has unnumbered and endless workmen of every kind. There is a fixed caste for every sort of work and for everything which has done that work or that thing from father to son till now. Mulla Sharaf, writing in the *Zafar Namah* about the building of Timur Beg's Stone Mosque, lays stress on the fact that on it 200 stone-cutters worked from Azarbaijan, Fars, Hindustan and other countries. But 680 men worked daily on many buildings in Agra, Sikri, Bayana, Dholpur, Gwalior and Koil. In the same way there are numberless artisans and workmen of every sort in Hindustan.

Most probably Babur would have modified his views about Hindustan, had he lived here longer and seen the beautiful scenery of Kashmir and other parts of India. Yet, there is no doubt about the fact that although he had deliberately and purposefully made India his home, he pined for his own land of melons and cold breeze. He wrote to Khwajah Kalan that as soon as the affairs of Hindustan were settled he would set out for Kabul without losing a moment. How could the delights of these lands ever be erased from the heart and mind? How could he possibly forget the delicious melons and grapes of that happy land? Once he was brought an Indian muskmelon. He cut it open and felt a deep homesickness and sense of exile from his native land and he could not help weeping. In fact, Babur had been ill and weary of his ceaseless activity after Panipat, and that is why he wanted to go to Kabul for rest and change. Deprived of the Kabul melons, he continued to get their seed from Balkh, he had them planted in the Eight Paradise Garden (*hasht behisht*) at Agra, and when they ripened he remarked with satisfaction: 'It filled my heart with content to have such grapes and melons in Hindustan.'

Khwajah Kalan had written to Babur about the unsettled conditions in Kabul. It is characteristic of Babur to talk of melons and grapes or grieve for the lost solace of wine, and all of a sudden adopt the authoritative tone of the Padshah and start expounding on how to organize good administration. He writes to Khwajah Kalan:

> You have written concerning the unsettled state of Kabul. After thinking it over attentively, I have made up my mind to this. How could a country be firmly held and strengthened if it had several governors? Accordingly, I have summoned my elder sister (Khanzadeh—an echo here of the feud among the women) and my wives to Hindustan. I have made Kabul and its neighbouring districts into a crown dominion, and have notified both Humayun and Kamran that much. Let men of judgment bear these letters to the princes....Make no more excuses of unsettlement, in safeguarding and nourishing the country—not a word more of that. From now on, if the citadel walls are not strong, the people are not thriving

or if provisions do not fill the store-houses, and money the treasury—any failure will be laid on the back of the pillar of the State (Khwajah Kalan himself).

What specifically, is listed herebelow. Regarding some of these matters I have written you already, especially the filling of the treasury.

First, repairs to the fort.

Again, getting the grain into storage.

Again, provisioning and quartering the envoys who come and go.

Take proper tax money for finishing the building of the Congregational Mosque, for repairing the caravanserai and the hot-batch chambers. Also for finishing the portico in the citaled, which Master Hassan 'Ali was building of burned brick...with a harmonious design like to, and level with, the Audience Hall.

Again, completion of the Little Kabul Dam, to hold the Butkhak water at the narrows—and repair of the Ghazni Dam.

Again, the Avenue Garden has insufficient water, and a one-mill stream must be diverted into it.

Again, I had water brought to the rise south-west of Khwajah Basta, and a reservoir made there and planted around with young trees. The place is called Lookout, because of the view across the fort. The best trees should be put in there, lawns made, and the borders set with sweet herbs, and bright-coloured flowers, all arranged in a good design.

Again, Sayyid Qasim has been appointed to aid you. Do not fail to drill the matchlockmen, and keep up the armour work of Master Muhammad Amin.

Immediately this letter reaches you, start my older sister and wives of Kabul and escort them as far as the Indus. They must start within a week of the arrival of this letter. For why? Because the armed forces sent from here to meet them will be waiting, quartered on poor land, which may be ruined by their waiting.

I wrote to Abdullah of the Night Guards that my mind was troubled by being with the oasis of repentence, in the desert of thirst.

Renouncement of wine has bereft me,
And will to work has left me,
Others repent, and vow to abstain,
I abstain and repentant remain. (Memoirs)

After the Ghagra campaign, Babur came straight to Agra. When he entered the fort and visited the members of his family who had arrived from Kabul, he was extremely happy. On this occasion he was presented a basketful of melons and grapes, which a melon-grower from Balkh, according to his instructions, had grown in the Eight Paradise Garden. Babur says that these were first rate. "To have such grapes and melons from the plantings in Hindustan filled up my measure of content."

Khanzada, elder sister of Babur, joined her husband, Mehdi Khwajah at Etawah. The other ladies with their attendants, who arrived from Kabul numbered ninety. They all remained in Agra and were suitably accommodated in accordance with their status. He visited his elderly aunts regularly when he was in Agra. Most of them were accommodated in palaces built according to his building project, his 'Kabul' at Agra as he named them. Babur's daughter, Gulbadan Begum, in her *Humayun Namah* says that her father performed the most marvellous things:

In Agra, on the other side of the river, he (Babur) ordeded a palace of stone to be built for himself between the *harem* and the garden. He took Her Highness, Maham, and this lowly person (Gulbadan Begum) to Dholpur where he had a tank cut in the solid rock about seven paces across. Once he had said, 'When it is finished, I shall fill it with wine.' But since he had given up drinking wine just before the battle with Rana Sanga, he filled it with lemon juice.

At Sikri (near the last great battlefield) His Majesty had ordered a reservoir to be made, with a platform in the middle of the tank, and when it was ready, he used to go there to sit or to row around....In the Sikri gardens my father had made a lofty stone pavilion, and he used to sit in it and write his book. Once I was sitting with my Afghan nurse in

the lower storey when My Lady (Maham) went to prayers. I said to the Afghan, 'Pull me up.' She pulled and my hand came out of joint. My strength failed and I began to cry. Then they sent for the bone-setter. Only after he had bound up my hand did the Padshah go away.

With the above memory of her father, Gulbadan Begum recalls the weariness Babur felt at times:

A few days he (Babur) paid a visit to the Gold scattering Garden (Bagh-i-Zar Afshan) It had a fountain for washing before prayer. When he saw this he said, 'My heart is weary with ruling and reigning. I will retire to live in this garden. As for servants, Tahir, the basin-bearer, will easily suffice. I shall make over the kingdom to Humayun'. At this my Lady and all the other children began to grieve, exclaiming with tears, 'May God keep you in his peace upon the throne for many many years.' And My Lady said, 'May your children after you live to a good old age'.

Humayun was directed by Babur to take greater interest in administrative matters and give up his usual casualness and carelessness in despatching business. It was only a month's journey from Hindustan to Badakhshan, and yet the messengers sent by the Padshah had to wait there, sometimes a whole year, to bring back the reply. He chided him (Humayun) for repeating so often in his letters, 'I wish to be alone.'

For some time past the decline in Babur's health had become evident to all about him. At the instance of his mother. Maham, Humayun who was at Badakhshan, set out, without his father's leave, to proceed to Agra to be able to counteract the intrigues there. But Mirza Haider, in his *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, affirms that Babur, at the same time that he appointed Kamran Mirza to take charge of Qandahar, recalled Humayun so that if anything adverse happened, he might be available to assume the reins of Padshahat. But other historians assert that Humayun proceeded to Agra from Badakhshan without the permission of Babur. Babur wanted him to stay on in Badakhshan. so that after the defeat of the Uzbeks by Shah Tahmasp, on

which occasion 'Ubaidullah Khan, leader of the Uzbeks was killed, Humayun taking advantage of this might organize an expedition to conquer Hissar, Samarqand or Merv, as might seem most fitting. He counselled him to show greater energy and resourcefulness for indolence and laziness do not accord with the exercise of sovereignty. He also advised him to put aside his penchant for solitude which made him fly from the society of others. He should not allow his younger brothers and *begs* to assert their independence; he must make them wait upon him twice a day, so that he could take their advice on important matters. Despite these counsels to Humayun, the latter was more interested in what was happening at Agra. He put Hindal, ten years of age, in charge of Badakhshan under the tutelage of the *begs*.

Gulbadan Begum observes that Humayun arrived at Agra without any previous notice:

> I was there talking with his (Humayun's) mother[1] when in he comes. His presence touched our hearts and made our eyes shine. It was my routine to hold public table everyday, but this day I gave a feast in his honour to show him distinction. For some time we were together in true intimacy. Indeed, it is charming to talk with him, and to perceive his splendid manhood.

Babur treated Humayun generously after his first shock of surprise and allotted him the *jagir* of Sambhal, one of the richest fiefs in northern India.

Babur, disturbed and perplexed owing to the fact that Badakhshan and its neighbourhood might fall into the hands of the Uzbeks, appointed Sulaiman Mirza, the son of his cousin, Khan Mirza, who had governed Badakhshan for a number of years, and who from the mother's side had descended from the ancient kings of Transoxiana, to take charge of the government of Badakhshan. Sulaiman Mirza arrived with an imperial order, recalling Hindal who, on Mirza's arrival in that kingdom, resigned to him the government, as he had been ordered,

[1] Humayun's mother was Maham, while Gulbadan Begum's mother was Dildar Begum.

and set out for Hindustan. The new governor assumed the direction of affairs forthwith, and his power was augmented by the confusion in Hindustan, which followed Babur's death. He assumed the title of Sulaiman Shah, which he transmitted to his descendants with almost independent authority.

Abul Fazl has noted in *Akbar Namah* that Humayun arrived at the palace in Agra when his mother Maham and the Emperor Babur were sitting together conversing about him. He was most affectionately welcomed. It seems that the whole course of his proceeding has much the air of a plan concerted between Humayun and his mother, who was conscious of her husband's declining health, and wished her son to be on the spot, as there was a strong party headed by Mir 'Ali Khalifa, the Prime Minister, who wished to set him aside from the succession owing to his indolence and lack of energy.

During his stay in India for four years and eight months, Babur suffered from recurrent fever (most probably malaria) and dysentery. Prince Humayun had been stricken with fever as the heat began and was brought to Agra by river. Babur was greatly saddened and grieved and began to show signs of dread. Gulbadan Begum in the *Humayun Namah* observes:

At that, my Lady (Maham) said, 'Don't trouble yourself about my son! You are king—what grief can you have? You have your other sons. I grieve because I have only this one.'

His Majesty answered, 'Maham! It is true I have other sons, but they are not Humayun, who is yours and mine. I pray that he may live to have what he desires, and live long. Did I not give the kingdom to him, instead of to the others who are not his equal.'

After Humayun was cured his illness, he was sent to his fief at Sambhal. When Babur's health deteriorated, he summoned Humayun from Sambhal, nominated him his successor in the presence of the chiefs and the dignitaries of the State. In the words of Gulbadan Begum:

> The day came when he called in his chiefs and spoke to them like this: 'It was in my heart to make over the throne

> to Prince Humayun, and to retire myself to the Gold Scattering Garden (Bagh-i-Zar Afshan). By Divine grace I have had many things bestowed on me, except to see this wish fulfilled. Now that illness has stretched me out, I charge you to acknowledge Humayun after me. Be loyal to him. Be of one heart together. I hope to God that Humayun will also bear himself well.'
>
> Then to Humayun alone he said, 'I give your brothers to your keeping. Be faithful to them, and all the people.'

Three days later Babur breathed his last on Sunday, 26 December, 1530 in his palace at the Charbagh near Agra. He was forty-eight years old. He reigned, in all, for over thirty-six years. His body at his own desire was carried to Kabul after several years, and buried in a beautiful garden marked out by himself, on a hill near the city, amidst charming surroundings, by the side of a running cool stream and sweet-shelling flowers. In front of the grave there is a small chaste mosque built of marble by Shahjahan after his conquest of Balkh.

Babur was the most brilliant Mughal monarch worthy of a high place among the sovereigns of Asia. His artistic temperament makes him an attractive figure. His cousin, Mirza Haider, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi,* rightly says that he was 'adorned with various virtues and clad with numberless excellences, above all which towered bravery and humanity.... Indeed, no one of his family before him ever possessed such talents, nor any of his race performed such amazing exploits or experienced such strange adventures. He possessed, in an eminent degree, the supreme virtue of a leader of men. He enjoyed and suffered with his men and shared their hardship. This is why he was adored by his soldiery. His behaviour inspired them with devotion. It was that devotion that enabled him again and again to achieve victory in most unfavourable conditions and against heavy odds.' Babur describes the hardships that he and his men equally shared at the time of his return from Herat in full winter.

> That night the storm was terrible, and snow fell so heavily that we all expected to die together. When we reached the

> mountain cave the storm was at its worst. We dismounted at its mouth. Deep snow! A one-man road! and even on that stamped down and trampled road, pitfalls for horses! The days at their shortest! The first arrivals reached the cave by daylight, later they dismounted wherever they happened to be; dawn found many still in the saddle. The cave secured was small. I took a shovel, and scraping and clearing the snow away made a place for myself as big as a prayer-carpet near its mouth. I dug down breast-high but did not reach the ground. This made me a little shelter from the wind when I sat right down in it. They begged me to go inside, but I would not. I felt that for me to be in warm shelter and comfort whilst my men were out in the snow and drift, for me to be sleeping at ease inside, whilst my men in misery and distress, was not a man's act, and far from comradeship. What strong men can stand, I would stand: for, as the Persian proverb says, 'In the company of friends, Death is a nuptial feast.' So I remained in the snow and wind in the hole that I had dug out, with snow four hands thick on my head and back and ears. (*Memoirs*)

Yet, Babur was a strict disciplinarian and awarded severe punishment to his men if they transgressed his orders. He even used violence to prevent outrage. In fact, his presence alone saved the honour of Daulat Khan's family. Babur preserved by his exertions on this occasion a fine library collected by Ghazi Khan, son of Daulat Khan, who was a man of learning. Having come to know that his troops had exercised some severities towards the inhabitants of Bahrah, and were ill treating them, he sent out a party, which, having seized a few of the soldiers that had been guilty of the excesses, put some of them to death, and slit the noses of some of others and had them led about the camp in that condition for having transgressed his instructions. He says in the *Memoirs*: 'As I reckoned the countries that had belonged to the Turks (after the conquest of Timur) as my own territories, I admitted of no plundering or pillage.' For the strict punishment meted out to the transgressing soldiery, allowance must be made for the spirit and manners of his age. He was intimate with his nobles and chiefs

and yet he knew how to keep a distance. He adopted the title of Padshah after the birth of Humayun in the year 1508 at Kabul. No other Chaghatay ruler had ever called himself a Padshah before Babur. They all called themselves Mirzas or Amirs. After Babur declared himself Padshah, his ambition aspired to the conquest of trans-Indus country and northern India, where confusion prevailed and from where he later on received invitations to invade. Glory and renown in every respect influenced his imagination, and he attained to a rare eminence of power and high distinction. When he died, his sway extended from the river Amu to Bihar. Beyond the Hindukush range he possessed Badakhshan and Qunduz, and all the districts to the south of the Oxus, as far down as the borders of Balkh. To the south of the mountains he held the territories of Kabul, Ghazni, and Qandahar as far as Baluchistan. He possessed the trans-Indus tribal territories right upto Swat, Bajaur and Peshawar. In Sind the *Khutba* was read in his name. Besides the whole of the Punjab, the rich provinces lying between Sutlej and Bihar were also conquered by him. He was the master of the country lying between the Himalayas and the kingdom of the Rajput and Malwa. In Bihar he possessed the greater part of the country, but some portions of it remained under the rule of the king of Bengal or the fugitive Afghan chiefs. In this vast empire, Babur did not have the time to enforce a uniform system of administration. The previous administrative practice and conventions were maintained, only the persons at the head were changed, who were rewarded with *jagirs*. They levied the government taxes. The *jagirdars* exercised both civil and criminal jurisdiction. He had enlisted both Hindu and Muslim *Amirs* in his service to carry on the administration of the country. As he was invested with the prestige of a conqueror, the *Amirs* and *jagirdars* did not attempt to assert their activity beyond reasonable limits. He married the daughters of the Raja of Chanderi to Humayun and Kamran, to identify his family with the people he had conquered, a policy so tactfully and eminently implemented by his grandson, Akbar.

Babur, after the conquest of Delhi and Agra, had squandered the vast treasures that he had inherited. Therefore, he had to

face a deficit and financial stringency which he tried to meet by a levy of 30 per cent on the revenues of all *jagirdars* in the realization of which he was sometimes ruthless.

Babur was a man of varied interests. In the intervals of campaigns, he busied himself in supervising building operations, constructing for himself palaces, baths and gardens. In his *Memoirs* he mentions his experience of gun-making and of artillery in action. In the battle of Ghagra, Ustad 'Ali Rumi, his expert gun-maker's attempts at making huge guns were not successful. Once the Ustad's big gun burst, killing eight persons. Then he made another one which he named the Victorious Gun. Babur gave his own suggestions to the Ustad in this connexion. Babur remarks that the second attempt was successful. On the first day he discharged it eight times, the second day sixteen times and for three or four days continued firing in the same way.

Babur had great interest in architecture and building activity. He embellished a saint's tomb at Ghazni with a dome, and constructed a mosque, caravanserai, and hot baths in Kabul. In India he applied himself assiduously to construction and laying out of gardens in between his military operations. He summoned from Constantinople pupils of the famous Albanian architect Sinan, who had designed many buildings in the Ottoman empire.[1] He states in the *Memoirs* that 680 Indian stone-cutters worked daily on his buildings in Agra, while 1491 were daily employed on his buildings at Sikri, Bayana, Gwalior and Dholpur, and Koil (Aligarh). Most of these craftsmen appear to have been engaged in the construction of pleasances, pavilions, baths, wells, tanks and fountains. Three mosques built by him have survived. One of them is in the Kabuli Bagh at Panipat, and another is the Jami' Masjid at Sambhal. The third one was built in the old Lodi fort at Agra which, he complained, was not well done and was built in the Hindustani fashion. Gulbadan Begum confirms his building activity at Agra: 'He commanded buildings to be put up in Agra on the other side of the river, and a stone palace to be built for himself between the harem (Seraglio) and the gardens.

[1] Saladin, *Manuel d' Art Musulman*, p.509, p.561.

He also had one built in the audience court, with a reservoir in the middle and four chambers in the four towers. On the river's bank he had a *Chaukandi* built'. The site referred to by Gulbadan Begum is most probably the one occupied by Babur's Bagh-i-Zar Afshan where he was temporarily buried.

Babur was deeply interested in laying out gardens with climbing terraces, fountains and waterfalls, flanked by parterres of shrubs and flowers. All of them had paved pathways, flowered parterres, avenues of cypress trees, ornamental water courses, tanks and fountains. In Agra, Char Bagh (Aram Bagh) and other gardens on the Jamuna were more or less of the same design. In these gardens he built reservoirs, baths and pavilions, and planted the beds with roses and narcissus. In the garden called 'Flower Scatterer' (Bagh-i-Gul Ashan) there were not only flowers of different varieties, but also hundreds of pineapples every year. He speaks of getting grapes from the vines which he planted in the 'Garden of Eight Paradise' (Bagh-i-Hasht Bahisht). He gave a poetic name to each and every garden. Being a lover of nature, he showed a keen appreciation of the loveliness of foliage and flowers. He had planted gardens in India to remind him of Kabul and Samarqand in spring. Babur's great contribution to India was the introduction of the art of garden planning and construction, following the Persian and Central Asian pattern, later developed by his successors to perfection.

Babur has given a vivid description of the first garden he laid out at Agra on the bank of the Jamuna river:

> One of the great defects of Hindustan being its lack of running water, it kept coming to my mind that waters should be made to flow by means of wheel (i.e., *rehat*) erected wherever I might settle down, also that ground should be laid out in an orderly and symmetrical way. With this object in view, we crossed the Jun-water (Jamuna) to look at garden-grounds a few days after entering Agra. Those grounds were so bad and unattractive that we traversed them with a hundred disgusts and repulsions. So ugly and displeasing were they, that the idea of making a Char Bagh in them passed from my mind, but needs must! As there was no

other land near Agra, that same ground was taken in hand a few days later.

The beginning was made with the large well from which water comes for the Hot bath, and also with the piece of ground where the tamarind trees and the octagonal tank now are. After that came the large tank, with its enclosure; after that the tank and *talar* (the talar is raised on pillars and open in front; it serves often for an audience hall) in front of the outer residence; after that the private house with its garden and various dwellings; after that the Hot bath. Then in that charmless and disorderly Hind, plots of garden were seen laid out with order and symmetry, with suitable borders and parterres in every corner and in every border rose and narcissus in perfect arrangement. (*Memoirs*).

There is difference of opinion as to the site of Babur's first garden in Agra. It is quite likely that the first garden laid out by him was Aram Bagh (Garden of repose) or Ram Bagh also known as Nur Afshan. It is the earliest Mughal garden to survive in recognizable form. It could be described as 'orderly and symmetrical' with platforms raised above ground-level from which to view the garden. There is a terrace on the east bank of the Jamuna, and on it are the remains of two buildings. Towards the south, an aqueduct and well survive in good state of preservation, while the water channels are in good form. A circular gravel space indicates what may have been the site of Babur's octagonal well.[1]

Babur planted several gardens in Agra. All of them had enclosures and were called Char Bagh or four-quartered gardens with terraces, paved paths, flower-beds, waterfalls, cascades, ponds and lakes as one of the principal adornments, as well as the *raison* d'etre of the garden itself. The Bagh-i-Zar Afshan, where he was laid to rest after his death in 1530, is popularly known as Chauburj or Chaukhandi. Other gardens designed and built by him as mentioned in Persian records are: Bagh-i-Gulafshan, Bagh-i-Hasht Behisht, Mehtab Bagh, Dehra Bagh and Zehra Bagh, the two latter were built for his daughters. It is doubtful if Bagh-i-Gul Afshan and Bagh-i-Nur Afshan are one and the same or two different gardens. He also laid a

[1] Haywood, S., *The Gardens of Mughal India*, p.63.

four-quartered garden called Bagh-i-Nilofar or Lotus-Garden at Dholpur. Thus he introduced the Persian and Central Asian traditions of garden-craft which were fully developed by his descendants. The famous gardens of Kashmir, the Shalimar and the Nishat, the garden of Pinjore, the gardens of the tombs of Humayun, Akbar, Itimadud-Daulah, Jahangir and the Taj Mahal and the indoor gardens of the Agra Fort and the Red Fort at Delhi, all owe their origin to the traditions of garden-craft introduced by Babur in India.

Babur in his *Memoirs* complains of dust and hot winds of India which he found trying even for his own robust and hardy constitution. He regarded it as a matter of urgent necessity to develop a new and refreshing environment to keep his followers contented, used as they were to cool and bracing climate of Afghanistan and the tribal territory. For this purpose water was to play an important part; whether in the gardens, in pools, channels, and fountains, or indoors in the form of baths.[1] One remarkable construction was a well in a garden, containing a three-storeyed house:

> When the water is at its lowest, it is one step below the bottom chamber; when it rises in the rains, it sometimes goes into the top storey. By this arrangement, descent to the lowest floor could offer water and a cool atmosphere. Babur's nobles and followers emulated his example and laid out regular and orderly gardens with tanks and running water along the whole east bank of the Jamuna river, where they had their lands. The whole area was so green and cool that 'the people of Hind who had never seen grounds planned so symmetrically and thus laid out, called the side of the Jun (Jamuna) where our residences were, Kabul. (*Memoirs*)

Babur was so much dedicated to garden-craft that when he found time after defeating his opponents, he wrote to his governor in Kabul, Khwaja Kalan, to attend punctiliously to the gardens he had planted there, so that they are kept well watered and properly maintained with flowers. Designing of gardens was one of his pleasant pastimes which he enjoyed as

[1] Haywood, S., *The Gardens of Mughal India* p.56.

much, if not more, than hunting, drinking parties with his close friends, and writing his diary in the Turki language. All this reveals the most attractive character of Babur, both humane and civilized by any universal standard. There seemed no limit to his energy and inventiveness. His pastimes were peripheral to his indefatigable devotion to the business of government which he had successfully stabilized after a long period of anarchy and confusion all over northern India. It was he who first introduced the cross-fertilization of cultural ideas between India and Central Asia and Iran. The increasing wealth and power of his successors accelerated the process begun in his time.

Babur was anxious to protect his subjects from the oppression of marauders and disorderly elements of the body politic. He mentions in his *Memoirs* that every time he entered India, the Jats and Gurjars poured down in prodigious numbers from their hills and wanted to carry off oxen and buffaloes. They were guilty of the severest oppression to the people. Later on, when he had reduced the whole of the neighbouring districts to subjection, they began to repeat their practice. Babur's soldiery pursued them and sought out the guilty among them and ordered two or three of their number to be cut to pieces. Thus he ruthlessly crushed their lawless activities, resulting in peace and tranquillity in the neighbouring territories.

Babur established mail-posts between Agra and Kabul, at a distance of fifteen miles from each other, and stationed relays of six horses and a number of officers at each to facilitate easy communications between the two politically important parts of the empire. Whenever he marched on his expeditions, he always caused roads to be measured and the statute he made regarding the measurement of distances remained in force during the reigns of his successors. According to Ferishta the *gaz-i-Sikandari*, or yard introduced by Sikandar Lodi, which was in general use in northern India for land measurement was replaced by *Babur-i-gaz* or yard of Babur which remained in use till the beginning of the reign of Jahangir.

Babur maintained the administrative machinery of the Lodis for the collection of revenue. He did not have enough time at his disposal to set up a new organization for this purpose. The

income realized from land revenue from the territories under his sway in northern India amounted to 52 crore *tankas*. Of this amount, *parganahs* to the value of 8 or 9 *crores* were in the possession of Rais or Rajas, who had offered submission and were allowed to retain these *parganahs* as their jagirs. On Raja Bikramajit, second son of Rana Sanga, who had offered to join Babur's service, was bestowed the fertile *parganah* of Shamsabad, situated in the present Farrukhabad district, in exchange for the fortress of Ranthabor which had a strategic importance for Rajputana. The chiefs who had offered allegiance retained their autonomous rights and paid an annual tribute to the Mughal Sovereign. The *jagirdars* who were appointed to administer the conquered territory enjoyed civil and criminal jurisdiction, but these areas did not become their own property. They were appointed merely to manage the *jagirs* and were removable at the pleasure of the sovereign.

The dominant trait of Babur's character is his uniform humaneness and kindliness of disposition. He was a man of letters, and his *Memoirs* (*Babur Namah*), through not wholly complete, must be reckoned among the most fascinating works of all times. Originally it was written in *Turki*, Babur's mother-tongue, and was later translated into Persian by Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan, son of Bairam Khan. The chief feature of the *Memoirs* is its truthfulness and objectivity. His accounts of different contemporary personalities are highly illuminating, vivid, straightforward and without reserve. The style is himple and vigorous. He speaks the truth and describes even his own vices and weaknesses. He has set down exactly what happened and has recorded every act precisely as it occurred. He was a keen observer of men and nature. He records the climate, the fauna, flora, products, water-supply, population, trade and commerce exactly as he saw them without any exaggeration of the use of ornate language so common among his contemporaries. He always aimed at simplicity of expression. He chides Humayun for his careless composition:

> Thou hast written me a letter, as I ordered thee to do. But why not have read it over? If thou hadst thought of reading it, thou couldst not have done it, and, unable thyself

> to read it, wouldst certainly have made alterations in it. Though by taking trouble it can be read, it is puzzling and whoever saw an enigma in prose? The spelling, though not bad, is not quite correct....Although thy letter can read if every sort of pains be taken, yet it cannot be quite understood because of that obscure working of thine. Thy remissness in letter writing seems to be due to the thing which makes thee obscure, that is to say, to elaboration. In future, write without elaboration; use plain clear words. So will thy trouble and thy reader's be less.

Babur was a calligraphist of no mean order. He invented a mode of writing known as "Khatt-i-Baburi" in which all the letters were written separately and not jointly as is usual. He wrote a copy of the *Quran* in his new writing and sent it to Mecca. A Russian scholar has discovered a manuscript written in "Khatt-i-Baburi" about which she has contributed a paper to the International Congress of Orientalists.[1] This mode of writing did not catch on, and no one else adopted it. He wrote poetry in *Turki* and Persian. His lyric poems are considered second only to those of Mir 'Ali Shir Navai, the friend and minister of King Husain Baiqara of Herat. Babur wrote a religious poem *Mubayyin* and a versified rendering of the *Risala-i-Walidiyya* of the famous Central Asian Saint Khwajah Ahrar. Besides literature he loved music and enjoyed musical parties. In fact, his charming and attractive personality was even more important than his military career of conquest. In his personality we find the blend of a great conqueror and a good and cultured man. 'Babur is', observes Stanley Lane-Poole, 'perhaps the most captivating personality in Oriental history, and the fact that he is able to impart this charm to his own *Momoirs* is not the least of his titles to fame. He is the link between Central Asia and India, between predatory hordes and Imperial government, between Timur and Akbar. The blood of the two great scourges of Asia, the Mongol and the Turk, Chengiz and Timur, mixed in his veins, and to the daring and restlessness of the nomad Tatar he joined culture

[1] Proceedings of XXVI International Congress of Orientalists, 1964.

and urbanity of the Persian man....His place in biography and in literature is determined rather by his daring adventure and persevering efforts in his earlier days, and by the delightful *Memoirs* in which he has related them. Soldier of fortune as he was, Babur was not less the man of fine literary taste and fastidious critical perception....The power and pomp of Babur's dynasty are gone, the records of his life—the *littera scripta* that mocks at time—remain unaltered and imperishable'.[1]

Babur laid the foundation of the rule of his dynasty in India, on which his grandson Akbar raised a solid Imperial structure, which lasted for more than two hundred years in all its glory and continued to linger on for another century and more in an effete form. To Babur goes the credit of bringing India into close contact with Central Asia, ushering in a process of cultural transformation which had vital national significance. Its composite character is our most valuable asset. Babur's predecessors, the Turko-Afghan rulers had broken all connexions with Central Asia, while he retained his hold over Kabul, Ghazni, Qandahar and Badakhshan, and even instructed Humayun, the governor of Badakhshan, to take full advantage of the defeat of the Uzbeks at the hands of the Safavid ruler, Shah Tahmasp of Persia and the consequent disruption of the Uzbek kingdom. Babur wanted Humayun to proceed to and conquer Samarqand, but Humayun did not have the energy and resourcefulness to act up to his father's advice. Babur, till the last moment of his life, retained the ambition of conquering Samarqand and governing it from Agra. There was a strong party among his chiefs and nobles, including Khwajah Kalan, who desired to rule northern India from Kabul, but Babur refused to be persuaded to accept their view-point. He had made India his home and Agra his Imperial capital once and for all. He wanted to treat his domain of Kabul as a province (*Suba*) of his Indian empire and thus redeem his Timurid heritage. He did not like the climate of Hindustan as his *Memoirs* indicate, but political considerations weighed with him more than his personal comfort and convenience. Most probably one of the political considerations which prompted him

[1] Lane-Poole, *Medieval India under Mohammedan Rule*, pp.143-6.

to make Agra the capital of his empire was that he desired to be out of the easy reach of the strong Safavid ruler who, although defeated by the Turkish Sultan Salim in battle, was still a force to be reckoned with.

By the time the Mughals came on the Indian scene, the political situation of the state had been more or less defined. The Turko-Afghans had already accepted the Hindu ethics of royalty and institutional life of northern India they had incorporated in their state system. Babur left the administration as he found it. It was left to his grandson Akbar to consolidate the administration in the light of the new political exigencies which he had inherited from the Turko-Afghans.

Timur called himself Amir, while his descendants contented themselves to the title of Mirza. Babur was the first Timurid to declare himself Padshah, after consolidating his position in Kabul in 1508, on the occasion of the birth of his son Humayun which ensured the continuity of his line and the principle of his state system. Gulbadan Begum observes in the *Humayun Namah*: 'That same year His Majesty was pleased to style himself Padshah (Emperor). For, before the birth of Emperor Humayun, he had been named and styled Mirza Babur. In the year of His Majesty Humayun's birth he styled himself Padshah.' This clearly shows that from the very beginning of his rule, he cherished the ambition of conquering northern India and laying the foundation of an empire.

The Safavid ruler, Shah Isma'il, was defeated by the Turkish King Sultan Salim at Chaldiran after which Sultan Salim established his sway over Syria and Egypt. Al-Mutawakkil, the last Abbasid Caliph of Egypt, surrendered the insignia of Khilafat to him in 1507, after which Salim issued a proclamation claiming hegemony over the entire Islamic world. He was also recognized as the Caliph by the Sharif of Mecca, but Babur did not recognize him as such. His concept of Padshah implied that he was Caliph in so far as his dominions were concerned. This tradition of indifference to the Caliph was continued by his descendants who claimed to be Caliph in their own right, without owing allegiance to the Ottoman Caliphs. Babur's career falls into two distinct phases, one negative and destructive, the other positive and constructive. His actions, though

governed by the principles of choice and consequence, were also at the mercy of other forces. History possesses its own dynamic force, and man's consciousness and actions are not only partly controlled by it, but actually emerge through it. The force of history made Babur a man of Destiny. He had no alternative but to accept his position, which unconsciously served a historical purpose. His conquest of India was not an isolated phenomenon, suspended in time and space. The historical matrix in which it was embedded and developed was as important as the events recorded in history.

Babur's concept of the *Padshahat* had great potentialities for the future. His son Humayun compared the ruler with the sun. He divided the administration of government into twelve orders according to the twelve signs of the Zodiac.[1] Abul Fazl derived his analogies of sovereignty from the Divine light. This also agreed with the Rajput tradition of the Suryavanshis deriving their origin from the sun. So Abul Fazl's theory of sovereignty was equally acceptable to the Rajputs and the Hindus in general. In this connexion Abul Fazl observes: 'Royalty is a light emanating from God, and a ray from the Sun, the illuminator of the Universe, the arrangement of the book of perfection, the receptacle of all virtues (*Akbar Namah*) 'It (royalty) is communicated by God to kings without the intermediate assistance of anyone, and man in the presence of it bends the forehead of praise towards the ground of submission....When he (king) performs an action, he considers God as the real doer of it (and himself as the medium) so that conflict of motives can produce no disturbance.' (*Ain-i-Akbari*) 'Certainly whoever withdraws himself from the obedience to such a sovereign works destruction to himself with his own hand.' (*Akbar Namah*). According to Abul Fazl, 'Padshah is a combination of two words, Pad and Shah. Pad means stability and Shah means origin or lord. A king is, therefore, the origin or stability and possession. If royalty did not exist, the storm of strife would never subside, nor would selfish ambition disappear.' (*Ain-i-Akbari*).

In the Turko-Afghan period of Indian history. fitness to

[1] *Qanun-i-Humayuni*, ed. and tr. by Beni Prashad, Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.

rule was the only criterion for kingship, while according to Abul Fazl, Kingship was God's gift. His thought is based on the mythical theory of the Mongol origin and the Hindu political theories which recognize supernatural origins of kingship. 'Kingship is a gift of God, it is not bestowed till many thousand grand requisites have been gathered in an individual. Race and wealth and the assembling of mob are not enough for this great position.' (*Akbar Namah*). Abul Fazl's *Imam-i-Adil* is divinely appointed and is the Perfect Man (Insan-i-Kamil) who has the right to wield both secular and ecclesiastical authority. The Infallibility Decree (Mahzar) gave Akbar the authority t oaccept any of the conflicting interpretations of the law (*Shari'a*) which he considered to be beneficial to the state. Like Al-Mamun, the Abbasid Caliph, Akbar became the sole arbiter in religious and political disputes, which implied supreme authority as the head of the state, without any check or limitation. It redounds to his credit that he exercised this absolute authority moderately and for the benefit of the people. Thus Babur's concept of *Padshahat* (Sovereignty) acquired a new meaning and a new purpose in the time of his grandson, Akbar the Great.

Babur died on 6th Jamadiu'l-awwal 937 A.H./26 December, 1530 A.D. from a sudden acute disorder of the bowels which the Hakims were unable to remedy and they said that they had discovered symptoms of the same poison with which Sultan Ibrahim's mother had attempted to take his life.[1] His epitaph quoted from Ilminski's fragment reads as follows:

> In the year 937, on the 6th of the 1st Jamadi (26 December, 1530) as the Emperor was in the Charbagh which he had made, he was seized with a serious illness and bade farewell to this transitory world. Let it suffice to say that he possessed eight fundamental qualities: lofty judgment, noble ambitions, the art of victory, the art of government, the art of conferring prosperity upon his people, the talent of ruling mildly the people of God, ability to win the hearts of his soldiers and love and justice.[2]

[1] Rushbrook Williams, op. cit., p.179.
[2] *Ibid*.

This statement is corroborated by Ahmad Yadgar, the author of *Tarikh-i-Afghanan*: 'Two or three months after this event, it became evident that His Majesty's (Babur's) health failed him. He was carried to his garden Charbagh on the bank of the river....In the year 937 A.H. he departed, by the decree of the Almighty, from this earth to Heaven, and forsook this thorny world of trouble for the rose-garden of paradise.' Abul Fazl also mentioned the Charbagh on the bank of the Jamuna where Babur died.[1] There seems to be great confusion as regards the identity of the Charbagh where Babur breathed his last. I am inclined to agree with the opinion of Shri R. Nath that this Charbagh was the Zar Afshan garden mentioned by Gulbadan Begum in the *Humayun Namah*. There are good grounds for accepting his premise.

Gulbadan says: 'Babur made an excursion to the Gold Scattering Garden (Bagh-i-Zar Afshan). There was a place in it for ablution before prayers. When he saw it, he said: 'My heart is bowed down by ruling and reigning; I will retire to this garden. As for attendance, Tahir the ewer-bearer will amply suffice. I will make over the kingdom to Humayun.' This garden was situated in the direction of the Taj Mahal on the east bank of the river Jamuna.[2] Gulbadan Begum also referred to Babur's tomb at Agra where the body was laid to rest temporarily. Humayun appointed 60 reciters of the Qur'an:

> Muhammad 'Ali Asas was made the guardian of the tomb and many well-voiced readers and reciters were appointed to conduct the five daily prayers and to offer supplication for the soul of the dead. The revenues of Sikri and 5 lacs from Biana were set aside for the endowment of the tomb and Maham Begum (Humayun's mother) sent from her own estate twice daily an allowance of food towards the support of its attendants.[3]

Babur's remains were carried to Kabul from Agra by Bibi Mubaraka, the Afghan wife of Babur. Babur had expressed a

1 *Akbar Namah*, vol.I, p.277.
2 Nath, R., *Islamic Culture*, 1974.
3 *Humayun Namah*, p.110.

wish in his lifetime that his body should be buried in his favourite garden at Kabul, known as Bagh-i-Babur 'in a grave open to sky with no building over it, no need of a door-keeper'[1]. Most probably his remains were removed to Kabul in the reign of Sher Shah Suri who, according to Mrs. Beveridge, provided a safe escort for Bibi Mubaraka's journey to Kabul, a fact in consonance with Sher Shah's generous character.

[1] *Memoirs*, vol. II, p.709.

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